

MISREPRESENTATIONS AND FALSEHOODS

OF

THE "FLY-SHEETS"

EXPOSED :

WITH

REMARKS ON THE ATTEMPTS TO AGITATE THE
WESLEYAN SOCIETIES.

BY JOSEPH HARGREAVES,

WESLEYAN MINISTER.

MARK all those that would set one of you against the other. Some such will never be wanting. But give them no countenance ; *rather ferret them out, and drag the: into open day.*—WESLEY'S WORKS, vol. xii., p. 309.

SECOND EDITION.

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If one be found slain in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him : then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain : and it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take an heifer, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke ; and the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley, which is neither eared nor sown, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley : and the priests the sons of Levi shall come near ; for them the Lord thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the Lord ; and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried : and all the elders of that city, that are next unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley : and they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it.—DEUT. XXI. 1—7.

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INTRODUCTION.

PUBLICATIONS have been lately issued, entitled, "All the Numbers of the 'Fly-Sheets' now first reprinted in one Pamphlet;" and, "The Fly-Sheets, verbatim, now first collected from the Originals." The former is published by Cornish and Bartlett, the latter by James Gilbert. On a comparison with the original "Fly-Sheets," it is abundantly evident, whoever may be accountable for the imposture, that a deception, quite in keeping with the whole character of these slanderous papers, has been practised upon the public.

Various considerable omissions, in some instances of passages very gross and offensive, prove that these publications are falsely described as "verbatim" reprints.

Both these editions are deceptive, as they suppress some of the most objectionable and slanderous portions of the originals; so that the readers of these mutilated reprints cannot possibly form a correct and adequate notion of the disgraceful tone and character of the *real* "Fly-Sheets."

It is singular that, in what were supposed to be *rival* publications, the same portions are, in nearly every case, omitted, as uniformly as if they had been printed from the same copy.

The first number is pretty correctly reprinted in each case; but not so any of the others.

In No. 2, under the head of "Platform," seven out of twenty-one sections are entirely omitted, as are the larger portions of pages 18 and 22.

In No. 3 there are numerous omissions. Nearly the whole of page 35, and the greater portion of the eight pages immediately following, are suppressed.

Of No. 4 there is not more than one-sixth given to the public in these reprints.

The editions here referred to are those which were recommended in Mr. Kaye's "Times." Of the first it was stated, Oct. 15th, "You will have, as far as we have examined, a faithful reprint, with one or two verbal exceptions, all the numbers of the "Fly-Sheets."

The following week, Gilbert's edition, with portraits, was said to be "more complete than any yet published." This was advertised as "Gilbert's Verbatim and Correct Edition!!"

A person having paid 2s. 6d. for the "Fly-Sheets Vindicated," and 1s. each for the so-called "verbatim reprints," would still be unable to ascertain any thing like the real character of the original "Fly-Sheets."

It is not my purpose, in the discharge of a painful duty, to expose all the falsehoods and misrepresentations contained in these notorious publications.

The proofs here given, which are but a sample of the spirit and character of the malicious libels, will suffice to show that these public accusers are not entitled to the least credit, as men of veracity and integrity.

In order to give the quotations as correctly as possible, I have taken them from the "Fly-Sheets" originally sent by post to Ministers.

THE
“FLY SHEETS” EXPOSED,

&c.

“IT is a fact, to which we refer with great satisfaction, that amid the heavy censures which have fallen on us, no one has dared to say that our *facts* are *fictions*, and that our *reasonings* are *sophisms*. Their truth in the one case, their force in the other, is their power.” “Osborn and Co. have shown their good-will towards the assailed; and had it been as easy to accomplish the refutation of the ‘Fly-Sheets,’ as they were willing to stoop to the office of servitors of the Inquisition, depend upon it, that, instead of a harmless Declaration that has missed the mark, the public would have been favoured by these chivalrous brethren with an unanswerable reply to our reasonings, and a triumphant demolition of our facts. No refutation has been attempted, for the most weighty of reasons,—*no refutation was possible*.”—Original “Fly-Sheets,” No. 4, pp. 1, 2.

It would be absurd in any one but the writer of the above remarkable sentences to attempt to prove that “*facts are fictions* ;” there are, however, many who have “dared” to say, and are prepared to *prove*, that there are statements made in the papers referred to, which are not “*facts*,” but mischievous “*fictions*.” This the Methodist Conference “dared to say” in the year 1847, after Messrs. Vevers, Thomas, and Osborn had publicly exposed the false and injurious character of these productions. “Osborn and Co.” thought they could best serve the interests of the Connexion by publicly disproving the pretence, that the greater portion of Wesleyan Ministers sympathized with the writers of the “Fly-Sheets.” In this they perfectly succeeded, to the annoyance of those who vainly boasted of the number of their adherents. And now that eleven hundred Ministers have answered for themselves, the mortified party are issuing partial and deceptive reprints of the “Fly-Sheets,” which are being circulated by all classes of the enemies of Wesleyan Methodism, Romish Priests and infidels among the rest; it is therefore of importance that their real character should be plainly pointed out.

The attempt is made fearlessly and faithfully, without any design but that of doing good. I have no prejudice to indulge,—no party purpose to serve,—no personal advantage to secure.

In exposing statements which are misleading and injurious, it is my intention to guard against uncharitableness and rashness, keeping in mind the apostolic injunction: “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.”

Free remarks upon the “Fly-Sheet” writers cannot be called personal and offensive, as the authors still withhold their names, and study the closest concealment.

I.—PERVERSION OF PUBLIC DOCUMENTS.

These writers ask, “Are not our main facts taken from public documents?”

A few extracts will show the deceptive character of this question, and the way in which “public documents” are perverted by these parties.

1. In page 11 of “Fly-Sheets,” No. 1, 2d edition, among the items of expense for 1834, there is the following:—“Medical expenses, and Mr. James’s funeral, £208. 4s. 9d.”

The entry in the Report, of which this is a professedly correct copy, is,—“By medical expenses for Secretaries and their families, from 1828 to 1833; and funeral expenses of the late Rev. John James, £208. 4s. 9d.” The writer knew, from the plain statement in the Report, that this apparently large sum did not belong to 1834, but to five years. If there was no intention to deceive, why was not the statement given entire, and why is that sum reckoned to the account of the present Secretaries? In the course of the five years mentioned, Dr. Townley had a long and distressing illness; but no notice whatever is taken of that fact. Mr. James, as is well known, died suddenly; and therefore, to make it appear that the medical expenses of that year, and his funeral expenses, amounted to so large a sum, was calculated to produce an unfavourable impression.

2. It is stated in p. 14, that, “with the exception of travelling expenses, these four men have cost the Fund, for personal comfort, not less than £500 per man, or £2,000 per annum!” Page 15, we have the following:—“Dr. Alder and his lady costing the Fund, at least, £500 per annum.”

“Public documents” prove these bold assertions to be wilful misrepresentations. Including the various items,

stated in the Reports, as paid for the Secretaries, such as rent, taxes, &c., the cost of each Secretary to the Society is less, by between one and two hundred pounds, than the sum so repeatedly stated in the "Fly-Sheets." It is most unfair and misleading to place to the account of the Secretaries the money expended in the purchase of a house, the expenses of the Mission-House for nine out of thirteen years, and other items having no more connexion with their income than the expenses of City-road chapel have with the allowances of the Ministers in the Circuit. If it be stated, that during three of the thirteen years mentioned there were only three Secretaries, while the average is taken for four, this does not meet the case, as more than one-fourth of the sum mentioned in the table has nothing whatever to do with the salaries of the Secretaries.

Under the head of "misapplication of the public funds," the Secretaries are said to have cost in thirteen years "£26,000!"

This is an untruth; and the attempts to cover and make it plausible, by the allusion to "travelling expenses," is most disingenuous. Not only the Missionary Reports, but also the table in "Fly-Sheets," No. 1, contradicts this statement. It is utterly impossible to substantiate this charge against Ministers, whose allowances are like those of their brethren in London, and are fixed by a mixed Committee. The salary of each official Minister in London is £150. Other items, as rents, taxes, children's allowances, &c., are paid as in the case of a Circuit Minister.

3. Dr. Bunting is charged, p. 29, with "allowing £40,000 to be abstracted from the Centenary Fund," for "the grand Centenary-Hall." In No. 3, p. 25, it is stated that the Doctor "could, without the sanction of the subscribers, advise and justify the appropriation of £40,000 for a few rooms to squat himself down in, in Bishopsgate-street."

In this offensive and groundless charge, several thousands are added to the cost. From what "public documents" could such information be obtained? Of the "Centenary-Hall and Mission-House," the Centenary Report, p. 26, states:—"This building is designed to meet the strong desire expressed at the meeting in Manchester, by *many* of the *largest subscribers*, to erect a suitable public testimonial of gratitude to Almighty God for the blessings conferred on our religious community."

What dependence can be placed on the most positive

assertions of those who can have the assurance to appeal to "public documents," when they totally misrepresent the case? Dr. Bunting had very little to do with the purchase or the arrangement referred to; as those know who were present at the large meeting in Manchester, when the *subscribers* resolved to have a public Monument and Mission-House.

It is not true that this "Grand Centenary Hall" cost £40,000. The following account of expenditure is given in Balance-Sheet, No. 1, of the Centenary Report:—"Grant for Site and Buildings, £15,000. Grant for the Erection and Completion of the New Buildings, £14,433. 13s. 7d. Interest on Outlay before payment of the above, £566. 6s. 5d." This business, which was settled ten years ago, must now be dragged in; and, to make a deeper impression, a very large sum is added to the actual expenditure. That cannot be a righteous cause which needs so much deception for its promotion.

4. In defiance of all evidence, as well as of all honesty and proper feeling, the worthy Doctor is charged (No. 3, page 14) with having received more than was due to him as President. The statement is as follows:—"And, notwithstanding the £50 quietly pocketed by Dr. Bunting, on the motion of Mr. Scott, the sum of £80 additional is placed to his account as President."

What excuse or palliation can be offered for outrages against truth and decency such as this? The Minutes of 1844 prove that £80 was the whole sum received by Dr. Bunting for the expenses of assistance during his Presidency. This is the sum generally allowed; and it did not more than meet the extra expenditure in this case. The offensive slander was calculated to do mischief, and therefore it must be published, in the hope that persons ignorant of the Doctor's real character would believe it.

5. Mr. Pengelly is said to have been favoured with a "Curate," No. 3, page 30. "Mr. Pengelly is allowed one, as Secretary of the School Fund."

This is another falsehood. Any one, who takes the trouble to examine, will find, that Mr. Pengelly never had a "Curate" during his Secretaryship, or at any other time.

6. In No. 1, page 35, there is the following sentence, "Well may the Missionary part of our church languish under the hands of the Lords Temporal in the Grand Centenary Hall!"

The following Table, drawn up from the Missionary Reports, and Minutes of Conference, which are "public

documents," proves that "the Missionary part of our church" does not "languish." The first numbers are taken from the Report for 1832-3, and will show the state of the Missionary work seventeen years since, the time from which the "Fly-Sheet" writers begin their calculations of expenditure. The last numbers are taken from the present year's Report.

1832.	1849.	Increase.
Stations, 150	290	140
Missionaries, 192	400	208
Members, 43,849	100,231	56,382
Scholars, 27,676	74,318	46,642
Income, £55,216. 10s. 4d.	£104,126. 19s. 7d.	£48,910. 9s. 3d.

The above Table affords encouraging proof that the last seventeen years have been the most prosperous period in the history of the Society; and that the honoured Officers, who have been so much maligned, have abundant cause to thank God and take courage. Their work is with the Lord, and their reward is with their God. It is peculiarly gratifying to know that, at the present time, the work of conversion is going on extensively, on several important Stations in the constantly enlarging field of Missionary enterprise.

At home and abroad "the soul-converting power" does still our "Ministers attend." We have not to ask in doubt and fear, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

7. A singular specimen of unfairness in dealing with a public question, and with "public documents," is found in No. 4, pages 11, 12, 13. "Is it not a suspicious circumstance, that any stir that has been made against the 'Fly-Sheets,' has aimed, not at the exculpation of the accused, but at the discovery of ourselves, the authors?" "Something was done; and that *something was worse than nothing*." "The sole aim of the clique and their instruments was to detect the author or authors, if among the brotherhood."

A long and deceptive account of the "Declaration" is connected with these statements, and it is insinuated that no other course was adopted with reference to the "Fly-Sheets;" while the fact is, that a Resolution *exculpating* the accused, and *strongly condemning* the "Fly-Sheets," passed the Conference with not more than three hands held up against it, one of the persons in the minority being Mr. Dunn. This gentleman says, "Not half the Preachers had read the 'Fly-Sheets,'" and intimates that they were not qualified to vote on the question. If Mr. Dunn knew to whom the "Fly-Sheets" had been sent, he was certainly qualified to speak on that point; but even then he could

not positively state how many had seen them. It is well known that before the vote was taken, passages were read, and falsehoods were exposed. Messrs. Vevers, Thomas, and Osborn pointed out the slanderous character of these publications. The President, with Mr. Fowler and others, spoke strongly in condemnation of these malicious attacks; and yet these facts are concealed, as though no condemnation had been uttered, no formal Resolution passed.

The deliberate, and all but unanimous, opinion of the Conference in 1847, as to these objectionable writings, was expressed in the following terms:—"Certain anonymous papers, bearing no name, either of the authors or printers, having been circulated in our Connexion during the last year, which contain many serious imputations on the integrity and disinterestedness of several of our senior Ministers, and other official members of the Conference, we feel it our duty to express our solemn conviction, that the spirit in which such publications originate is entirely at variance with the law of Christ; and that the brethren thus wickedly and slanderously attacked deserve our sympathy and unabated confidence. And with reference to the Rev. Dr. Bunting and the Rev. Dr. Newton, in particular, the Conference gladly takes this opportunity of re-asserting those sentiments of affectionate respect which it has already more than once expressed in its published Resolutions, particularly in the Minutes of 1833 and 1835." (See Minutes, vol. x., p. 553.)

With such a record, published in the Minutes of Conference, and with the knowledge of what took place in the course of the debate, it is surprising that any party should be found bold enough to pretend, that the discussion and the Resolution are "*worse than nothing*;" and it is little to the purpose to ask, "And can the Conference, in honour, pass these allegations unnoticed?"

Hundreds of Ministers had by their votes declared, that their brethren had been "wickedly and slanderously attacked." As a matter of convenience, the "Fly-Sheet" writers leave this "*unnoticed*," and argue as though the Conference had never uttered an opinion on the subject. These writers, whose "*facts*" are not "*fictions*," have entirely left out of their statement one important discussion and its result, and have given a garbled and one-sided representation of the other.

By this means many have been deceived, and have written and spoken as though Conference had been almost

equally divided on the question of noticing the "Fly-Sheets" at all; while all who were present know that the only point on which there was a difference of opinion was, as to the necessity of a "Declaration," after the passing of so strong a Resolution, condemnatory of the "Fly-Sheets." Nearly the whole of the minority, in the latter case, had united in the former vote, declaring these anonymous papers "wicked and slanderous."

On this topic alone more than a hundred lines are suppressed in the reprints. Some of the portions omitted are peculiarly offensive and malicious.

On points which cannot be referred to "public documents," deception is practised on a large scale.

II.—FALSE STATEMENTS ON PUBLIC MATTERS.

1. In No. 1, p. 20, is the following sentence:—"For parade, look at the Centenary Hall, with its livery servants, ushering gentlemen into the august presence of the sovereign, or letting them wait till royalty is disposed to give audience."

This is "fiction," the design of which can only be to do injury. There is no such "parade" and display as is here represented. There is no livery servant kept in the establishment; nor was there at the time the assertion was made.

2. The above charge is followed by an allusion to the "parade" of Wesleyan *soirées*, &c. The reference here made is enlarged upon, in p. 39 of "Fly-Sheets Vindicated," in the following terms:—"Think of Wesleyan Ministers showing off in white kid gloves! and the gentlemen and ladies, after walking about arm in arm through the suite of apartments, refreshing themselves with wines and other drinks, cakes, &c., and indulging, for some hours, in this fashionable lounging, retire without singing, without prayer, without devotion of any kind! And these men are to be lauded to the skies!"

This is a wilful, barefaced falsehood. The *soirée* here alluded to is a friendly tea-meeting, in which the *only* "drinks" introduced are tea and coffee, and these provided in a plain and economical way.

All who have been present can attest, that "wines and other drinks" of an intoxicating nature have never been introduced. Wesleyan Ministers do not show off in white kid gloves. So far from there being *no* devotional exercise, a *great* portion of the time is always spent in what is strictly devotional. There is, on every occasion, without exception, singing and prayer, reading God's word, and religious exhortation.

Meetings have been lately held, by avowed religious reformers, where singing and prayer are followed by unscrupulous and slanderous attacks on absent persons; and these most dishonourable attacks received with shouts of applause, even in places of religious worship. There is nothing of that nature ever heard at the Mission-House *soirées*. These meetings are truly religious in their character, and are conducted with the greatest propriety.

3. In "Fly-Sheets Vindicated," (p. 54,) is the following statement:—"It is generally rumoured that a costly article of furniture has been recently introduced into Dr. Alder's house,—library shelves, at an expense of £70 hard cash!"

This is *one* among *many* false statements made concerning Dr. Alder. I have ascertained that, not recently, but several years since, a very useful article of furniture was introduced into the house in Hatton-Garden. It was not paid for in "hard cash," but was taken in exchange for articles rendered unsuitable by a removal to a new house. These unscrupulous writers add about ninety per cent. to its estimated value.

4. In No 1, p. 35, it is stated, that "there is scarcely a returned Missionary with whom they," that is, the Missionary Secretaries, "have not had a squabble; and several have been compelled to go without a redress of grievances, and the payment of their just demands." In No. 3, p. 43, this glaring falsehood is repeated, with some additions; and in "Fly-Sheets Vindicated," p. 58, there is reference to an "official slop-shop, for the outfit of Wesleyan Missionaries, where the best articles may be had at the lowest prices—and *may not be*." It is insinuated, that some parties have had reason to say, "Ah! I was duped there."

There may possibly be among the returned Missionaries one or two unjustly-dissatisfied complainers; but these worthy men, in general, speak well of the system, and of the executive, and have the highest respect for the officers of the Society. The claims of Missionaries upon the Society are adjusted, not by the Secretaries, but by a Committee of Ministers and Laymen, appointed to settle all financial arrangements.

The reference to an "official slop-shop," where Missionaries have been "duped," is a "fiction," having not the slightest foundation in "fact." No Secretary makes a gain by supplying "outfits" for the Missionaries.

This mean insinuation, like the one respecting £1000 per year arising from discounts, is altogether groundless. The character of the parties places them above such suspicion. Great care and diligence have been employed for

the benefit of the Missionaries, without any pecuniary advantages being sought or received by any of the Secretaries.

5. In No. 1, p. 9, it is stated of "location," that "it is the fruitful parent of intrigue; and, while the Stewards and friends are looking in one direction, the located Preachers are looking in another, and employing their influence to secure such men only in the metropolitan appointments as will chime in with, or not oppose, their measures." In p. 10, we are told that, by "location," "selfishness, in all its odiousness, is infused into the mind."

These statements are false. Did the "located Preachers" interfere with the appointments of Dr. Beaumont, Mr. Fowler, and others who might be named? It is well known that they do not meddle with the London appointments in general. The Stationing Committee interferes in some cases, and that very properly, and to the advantage of the Connexion. The "located Preachers" are as free from selfishness as the rest of their brethren in the work.

6. "Centralization" is said to lead to "tyranny" and "pride," by which "the party domineer, and ride over the heads of others." This is re-asserted, in strong terms, No. 4, p. 5: "We have shown it to be a vortex engulfing every interest of Methodism, as the Maelstrom sucks in every vessel afloat in its vicinity. We have shown that it leads to *tyranny*,—enabling one party to ride roughshod over the heads of another; to *pride*, both in the titles and state it gives to the elect few; to *partiality*, one man having £500, and another £200, for pretty much the same amount of work."

All this may seem very *fine*, but it is *foul* and slanderous. Let unprejudiced men, free from mortified pride and jealousy, judge of the conduct of these abused Ministers, and the decision will be of a widely different character from that found in the "Fly-Sheets." As to any Minister in the Wesleyan Connexion having a salary of £500, it is a wilful falsehood, the frequent repetition of which in the "Fly-Sheets," in spite of sufficient evidence to the contrary, is really very offensive and sinful.

7. Ministers of Christ, who have been placed by the suffrages of their brethren in important official situations, are represented as "tricksters, drones, sinecurists, locators, lords," &c. They are charged with "a misapplication of the public funds;" with lending themselves to "a system of trickery and low cunning." They are represented as secularized; and we are told, "This endangers not only the Connexion, but the souls of the persons in question." And again: "They remind us of a set of fat, downy Bishops; or, in the less complimentary language of Pope, 'oily men of God!'"

In addition to these terms, there are vulgar phrases too coarse to quote. The writers of such passages as have

been cited, must be *wilfully* ignorant or *bitterly* prejudiced. There is no other way of accounting for the fierce attacks made on some of the best men, and brightest ornaments, in the Wesleyan section of the church of Christ; men who, though not in Circuits, are consecrating their talents to the service of God, in promoting the real interests of Methodism. They are not serving themselves, but are devoting their lives, and employing their energies, in the cause of Christ. With reference to these worthy men, it is asked, No. 1, p. 34, "Why keep them in office till twice dead, and plucked up by the roots?"

III.—PERSONAL CALUMNIES.

Beside these sweeping charges brought against the located Ministers as a body, furious attacks are made on individuals.

Mr. Mason is represented as exercising tyranny over his brethren, and as being made *worldly* by his official duties. This glaring untruth can only gain credit where he is not known. All who know him must admit that he is peculiarly fitted for the office he sustains. The respect felt for Mr. Mason by his brethren was manifested a short time since by his *unanimous* re-election to the office of Book-Steward for another term. By persevering diligence, and the most judicious management, he has rendered invaluable service to the ministry, and to the Connexion generally.

Mr. Cubitt is assailed in the most cruel manner, and reproach is plentifully heaped upon him. He is represented as completely enslaved by an act of private friendship, which certainly no one had a right to meddle with.

Mr. Scott, one of the most efficient and judicious Superintendents in the whole Connexion, a Minister who is diligent and laborious in every department of the work in which he engages, is represented as being "hawked about, till the people are drugged with him."

Let his merits and services be judged of by those who have had the means of examining them; let the Circuits in which he has travelled give an unbiassed testimony; and it will in all places be in favour of the man and his administration. Character is never safe in the hands of these anonymous slanderers.

No Minister is so constantly misrepresented and slandered in the "Fly-Sheets" as Dr. Bunting. The worthy Doctor owes that distinction to his peculiarly eminent

intellectual power and moral worth. The archers have indeed shot at him their envenomed arrows, "even bitter words," with persevering industry.

1. Dr. Bunting is styled the "great Locator," the "Dictator," &c.

2. In No. 1, p. 10, are the following sentences:—"Centralization was unknown in the body before Dr. Bunting was located in the metropolis; and for a man to be allowed to constitute a state of things so accommodating to his natural indolence, his ambition, his tyranny, his selfishness, and Jesuitical cunning, when he must have known, and the brethren must know, no other man would ever be indulged in the same way, is one of the marvels of the nineteenth century." "His native cunning rarely fails him." Again, p. 20: "He stands forward in a body of men remarkable for openness, frankness, and uprightness—all of which qualities are opposed to his own, and which render them unsuspecting."

All this insulting language is used with reference to a venerable and beloved Minister who has devoted a long life to Methodism, and whose character for the strictest integrity and freedom from selfishness has never been sullied. To no man, since the days of Wesley, does Methodism owe so much.

3. In p. 24, it is said in the case of Mr. Dunn: "And yet, at a subsequent Conference, after denying him justice, Dr. Bunting had the hardihood, in his usual merciless way to the feelings of others, to tell him that he ought rather to ask pardon of the Conference for leaving it in the manner he did, than to speak on the subject in question;—one of his customary brow-beating ways of answering an argument." Referring to the appointment of a Committee to hear Mr. Dunn's case, and report to the Conference, it is stated: "There is policy in all this; but it is sinister: it is to obtain power: and it is impossible not to dispute the purity of his motives, in the packing of these Committees," &c.

The Stewards of the Dudley Circuit charged Mr. Dunn with having virtually disfranchised the Quarterly-Meeting. This charge had been proved at the District Meeting, and, of course, passed on to the Conference. A Committee was appointed to hear Mr. Dunn's defence, and report to the Conference. Mr. Dunn refused to submit to his brethren, declared he would not meet the parties appointed to examine the case, and left the Conference in "*disgust*," because he could not have his own way. He was so hugely offended, that he declared to a friend his intention to leave the Connexion, and seek admission into the Established Church; for which purpose he actually waited on the Bishop of London. And now Dr. Bunting is abused for having reminded Mr. Dunn of the spirit he had manifested, and of the apology which he owed to the Conference for his petulance and

wrathfulness. If every man has the right Mr. Dunn demanded, to be heard at length in full Conference, it would require months instead of weeks to finish the business.

4. Dr. Bunting is represented, in pages 16 and 19 of No. 2, as having "drawn his web around him like a spider, till he has ensnared the whole Conference;" and the "Fly-Sheet" writers fear, "that nothing short of a tempest will blow the web away, unless a kind Providence should interfere." "In this way have the brethren been juggled out of their privileges and liberties."

The writers of these insinuations and charges know that Dr. Bunting has taken the lead in measures which were designed to secure and to extend the liberties of the Preachers and the people. All true lovers of Methodism will be grateful to "a kind Providence," for having continued to the Connexion the invaluable services of this eminent Minister for so lengthened a period. May he still be spared to see our "Jerusalem a quiet habitation," having "peace in all her borders, and prosperity in all her palaces!"

5. Those who have attended Conferences know that the accounts given in the "Fly-Sheets" of Dr. Bunting's sayings and doings there, are garbled and incorrect. In No. 3, p. 8, Mr. Griffith is said to have waited upon the Doctor in order to rebuke him for having singled him out of the assembly in such a "marked and uncourteous manner."

Only think of Dr. Bunting silenced and reproved by Mr. Griffith! It was stated in Conference that the language attributed to Dr. Bunting was uttered by Mr. Atherton; as in another case, mentioned p. 29, a reply to Dr. Beaumont came, not from Dr. Bunting, as stated, but from Mr. Thomas.

6. Dr. Bunting is charged with making the House of Commons "his chief place of resort for years." It is also said, "We have heard it stated, by students of the Institution connected with the metropolis, that, during the two and three years of their residence in it, they never saw the face of Dr. Bunting within its walls." (See No. 1, p. 20.)

These are palpable falsehoods, as can easily be proved to the satisfaction of any one, not sufficiently acquainted with the Doctor to know his general habits. Dr. Bunting has never been in the habit of spending more time in the House of Commons than became his position in society, or was required by public matters of connexional importance which called him thither. No student can have been

in the Institution three years, or one year, without an opportunity of seeing Dr. Bunting's "face within its walls."

7. It is truly distressing to find men belonging to the same society with Dr. Bunting, using, with reference to that eminently great and good man, such virulent epithets as the following :—"The 'great image,' the giver of places, preferments, and pensions." (No. 3, p. 11.) "The Doctor, like all tyrants, proves himself a mean man." (No. 4, p. 20.) With distinct reference to him, these writers say :—"If the church is to be saved, the Pope must fall : if the reformation is to go on, Wolsey must be removed out of the way." (No. 3, p. 22.) "Methodism has been long enough ruled by this Infallible Head." (Page 23.)

8. Notwithstanding the abundant evidence of the Doctor's disinterestedness, and his superiority to the influence of lucre, he is represented as selfish and money-loving. "It has been money, money ! money ! !—money in the beginning, money in the middle, and money at the end : not certainly altogether for himself ; but he has had his share in the whole, and has been as well kept as most." (No. 1, p. 31.)

These calumnies are brought against a Minister who for fifty years has been diligently employed for the good of others. What has he ever gained or sought to gain ? He gave up flattering prospects and tempting offers in early life to become a Methodist Preacher. He might have begun the world with a larger amount of income than he has ever received from Methodism. His talents and energy would have fitted him to take the first rank in any walk of life he might have chosen.

He has toiled and suffered for the promotion of a cause which he has ever loved. And to him, under God, that cause is deeply indebted for its freedom and its efficiency. This lover of money and "giver of pensions" has, after a service of fifty years, the amazing sum of £150 salary, with house-rent, taxes, coals, and candles paid for in addition ! What might he have had, or rather what might he not have had, in his profession, in the Established Church, or as a Dissenting Minister ?

9. There is a cruel slander found in No. 1, p. 14, and repeated, with variations, in other Numbers :—"Lay influence purchased, and independence sold, over the breakfast-table at Birmingham ! ! ! " "He has always been observed to pay an idolatrous homage to the rich."

A baser slander has been seldom penned. Were this the place for detailing particulars, I could satisfy others of the truth of what I take on myself most distinctly to assert, that the transaction under notice casts not the slightest shade over Dr. Bunting's disinterestedness.

There is not, in fact, even a plausible pretext for the mean insinuation of traitorous dealing; the names of the friends who expressed, in this instance, their esteem for Dr. Bunting, being unknown to him to this day; and the story about a breakfast at Birmingham being among the fictions of the "Fly-Sheets."

Indeed, the slanderers must know, if they know any thing, that of all public men Dr. Bunting is the last to sacrifice a principle, or violate a conviction of duty, either for friend or foe, whether lay or clerical. The affair, so officiously and maliciously misrepresented, was simply a private testimonial of personal friendship, and of high appreciation of his long and valued public services.

Dr. Bunting is a Minister to be venerated for his age, his moral and intellectual worth; a man of whom any branch of the church might be proud, and to whom the leading men of various denominations have learned to look up with respect and affection, increased in proportion as they have had opportunities of witnessing the development of what some of them have called his "*sanctified wisdom*." In the "Wesleyan Takings," said to be edited by Mr. Everett himself, a not over-partial critic makes the following remarks with reference to Dr. Bunting:—"As a preacher, his claims to eminence are indisputable; as a Christian, he is irreproachable; but he is great in mind and great in influence,—too great to be forgiven; if he were less so, it might be borne." "Though complaints have been uttered, we have never yet heard of the complainants proposing plans founded on better general principles; all acquit him of selfishness; all unite in giving him credit for the purest motives." "And we again inquire, How has he obtained such ascendancy in the body? Not by fraud, not by misconduct; but by lending his superior talents to promote the best interests of the Connexion." "He has watched while others have slept; he has laboured while others have loitered; by attending to the interest of the whole, knowledge has poured in upon him from every quarter; men of inferior talent have committed their concerns into his hands; and now he reigns supreme, is equal to a King in Israel; with this security to the body,—he is wise and good."

Selfishness and trickery could never raise any man to an elevation like that attained by Dr. Bunting. Superior talent combined with eminent moral integrity has placed him on a lofty eminence; and it is vain to attempt to

bring him down to the level of his assailants by "envy, hatred, and uncharitableness."

The eloquent, laborious, and beloved Dr. Newton is attacked in sweeping charges of systematically injuring his brethren, in "the slaughter-house of ministerial character,—the Stationing Committee:" a Committee, be it remembered, chosen annually by the whole body of Ministers. Of the Doctor it is said, No. 3, p. 2, "Wherever he goes he does his best to open the doors of the most desirable Circuits for himself and for his favourites; and to prejudice the minds of our influential and official men against those whom he (we will not say hates, but) loves less, and so shuts the door against them. All this under-working, counter-working, and indulgence of the worst feelings, is to be devoutly laid at the door of piety; and every man is to consider his appointment as providential. As though providence would work with such tools, and honour such feelings!"

This "railing accusation" is brought against a venerable Minister who has, for half a century, served Methodism with an uninterrupted exercise of the most persuasive and powerful eloquence, and untiring zeal. He has, indeed, been "in labours more abundant;" travelling several thousands of miles year by year to promote the interests of Methodism and the glory of God. Beloved by the societies, and made a great blessing to multitudes, he has gone in and out before the people with an unblemished reputation during fifty years. His "praise is in all the churches."

It will not be believed that Dr. Newton needs to seek for himself admission into any Circuit, the best of them would be glad to receive him; nor does he act towards others in the way of which he is accused.

While thankful to the Head of the church for such leading Ministers as our society is favoured with, I can confidently state, that the men of my own standing—the junior Ministers—will not shrink from the duty, in times of trial and difficulty, of rallying round the noble men who have borne the burden and heat of the day. If in taking modestly, but courageously, our proper share in the difficulties and duties of the times, we should share in the obloquy that has fallen on better men than ourselves, we will not be deterred; but, on the contrary, while doing our duty in such circumstances, will say,—"‘All hail reproach’ in such a cause!"

After the experience and observation of more than twenty years as a Wesleyan Minister, I most positively deny the imputation, that one class in the Conference attempts to exercise tyranny over their brethren.

The slanderous attacks on our leading and official Ministers are such as no honourable-minded individuals can approve, and such as no well-conducted society would tolerate.

These parties profess to justify their concealment by the fact, that "several books of the sacred records are anonymous;" that "most of the Reformers were compelled to work in the dark;" and if their style be objected to, "Moses" and "Jesus" were severe. It is most offensive to attempt to justify anonymous slander by such references. For men to refuse to bring forward charges that may be met and dealt with, at the proper place and time, and in a fair and constitutional manner, and then hide themselves, that they may indulge their malicious designs, is an un-English, an unscriptural proceeding. "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off." (Psalm ci. 5.) Among the things which the Lord hateth is "a false witness that speaketh lies, and him that soweth discord among brethren." (Prov. vi. 19.) Barrow says, to "impose odious names and characters on any person, which he deserveth not, or without ground of truth, is to play the devil; and hell itself scarce will own a fouler practice." Baxter says, "He is a mortal enemy to love who backbiteth another, and saith he is profane, or he is an empty formalist, or he is a lukewarm, temporizing, complying man-pleaser; as he that saith, he is a peevish, factious hypocrite." Dr. Campbell, the Editor of the "Christian Witness," has the following strong expressions on the subject:—"It will generally be found that the Corporation of Censors does nothing else. In this way they seem to have compounded duty with conscience. The power that rules them is malice and envy. They are revolting specimens of fallen nature. Doing nothing themselves that is praiseworthy, they spend their strength in detracting from the praiseworthy deeds of others. This is a work which can be carried on with a very small capital of either conscience, or character, or sense." Dr. Campbell must, on principle, hereafter condemn the anonymous attacks on character contained in the "Fly-Sheets." Such wholesale slanders, issued by men in ambush, are discre-

ditable to the religion professed by the parties, and exhibit loose and antinomian notions of Christian morality ; while they give occasion to the enemies of the truth to triumph and blaspheme.

The indulgence of a censorious spirit cannot co-exist with eminent piety. It shows a lamentable state of heart, when slanderous attacks on character afford gratification.

Inspiration ranks the "railer," that is, "one who insults or defames by opprobrious language," with the "idolater," and the "drunkard ;" and directs us to "keep no company" with such a person, "no, not to eat." (See 1 Cor. v. 11.)

Mr. Eckett, the leading Minister of the Wesleyan Association, though he blames the Conference, as might be expected, makes the following remarks : "The charges brought forward in the 'Fly-Sheets' are of such a nature, that they seriously affect the characters, not only of the persons directly implicated, but also the character of the Conference itself. If the charges contained in the 'Fly-Sheets' were believed by the Conference, it would be its duty to institute a rigid investigation, and to punish any delinquency which might be proved. It is, however, not reasonable to expect the Conference to investigate anonymous charges, which it knows, or at least professes to know, to be unfounded. As the Conference believed that some of its own members were concerned in circulating those charges, it was only reasonable—if it regarded the charges as calumnious and injurious to the characters of brethren held in high repute by them, and injurious to the interests of the Connexion—that it should use strong measures to endeavour to find out the authors of the 'Fly-Sheets.' 'The clique' are represented as being 'tricksters, drones, sinecurists, locaters, lords, selfish, and tyrannical.' They are directly charged with the mismanagement and malappropriation of the Funds of the Connexion ; and in the 'Fly-Sheets Vindicated,' there is an insinuation which is calculated to produce an impression, that the party referred to is guilty of grossly fraudulent and swindling practices. I confess that my sense of propriety strongly revolts against such anonymous charges as are contained in the 'Fly-Sheets,' and in the 'Vindication' of them."

The leading journal, "The Times," says, "They charge

on the leaders what is called 'jobbing.' They do this fiercely, and we must also say illegally, as the obnoxious 'Fly-Sheets' bear not the name of either author, publisher, or printer. In all this there is something to censure and much to deplore."

In the "Christian Times," a writer who has read for himself the "Fly-Sheets Vindicated," though he has not had the means of knowing how gross the misrepresentations are, observes: "The idea of men leaguings together, or of one man determining for himself, to write and print a series of papers—which papers, without author or printer's name, should be scattered throughout the land by means of the post—really does strike us as something monstrous." "We may be wrong, our natural instincts may be vitiated or corrupt; but we do say, that we cannot contemplate this proceeding without an instinctive repugnance amounting to something like disgust and loathing. The *principle* of the thing appears to us to be totally, utterly, and for ever unjustifiable."

The Free-Church Magazine, for October, has a spirited article on the subject. The Editors say,—“We have no sympathy with the outcry that has been raised in certain quarters against the Wesleyan Conference.”

On the first number of the "Fly-Sheets" they remark, "Charges of exclusivism, favouritism, and selfishness are hurled against the leading Methodists," &c. "Everything vile, paltry, and base is imputed to those men with persevering deliberation, and in every variety of offensive form."

To insinuate such treachery, on the part of official men, as is implied in the assertion,—“That a well-drawn-up report, after an impartial examination of all documents, ledgers, and officials, &c., would be worth £100,000 just now to the Missionary Society,” is a most objectionable proceeding, which no excuse can justify. We do not pretend that our leading Ministers are absolutely free from all the failings of human nature. They lay claim to nothing like infallibility; nor is it pretended that every word and every act of the best of men is free from objection. But we do claim for them the credit of the strictest integrity, and most honourable proceeding. Some of them have rendered service to Methodism for which coming generations will revere their memories. If competent parties were fully to investigate their whole conduct, all the

charges of want of integrity brought against them would be scattered to the winds,

“And, like a dew-drop from the lion’s mane,
Be shook to air.”

The “expelled Ministers” have not publicly avowed themselves the writers of the “Fly-Sheets,” and we do not *here* charge them with being the authors; but they may be regarded as fully committed to the statements they contain, and as now connected with their circulation.

The avowed organ of the party, Mr. Kaye’s “Times,” has advocated their publication, and intimated an intention of reprinting them in its columns. Mr. Dunn has said what amounts to a defence of them, and called for proof of their being “false and injurious.” Mr. Griffith has publicly urged people to read them. It is not denied that Mr. Everett has borne part of the expense of printing them; or that he has solicited assistance for the production and the printing of these and similar publications. Mr. Milner has openly and honestly avowed his readiness to prove Mr. Everett’s connexion with the “Fly-Sheets” in several particulars.

The violent attacks made in public meetings, and by means of the press, on the parties slandered in the “Fly-Sheets,” by these gentlemen, in a manner and spirit similar to what has been painfully manifest in those papers, lead to the conclusion that they are unhappily identified with that movement.

The agitation is directed against ministerial influence and authority. The cry is raised of “tyranny,” “Jesuitical proceedings,” “Romish cruelty:” the ministry is represented as good individually, but unsuited to the times, and thoroughly bad collectively. Members of society, who thought themselves perfectly free, are assured that they are the veriest slaves, and are earnestly exhorted to break chains the existence of which they had never discovered. Attempts are systematically made to injure the Conference, and bring it into contempt. Individual Ministers are attacked and misrepresented, in large companies of persons belonging to any denomination, or to no denomination. All who have either curiosity or prejudice enough to induce them to attend, may have tickets.

It is possible they may so far succeed, as, in some cases, to separate chief friends, disturb and injure a few societies by introducing the element of discord among

them, and destroying the mutual confidence which previously existed. Souls may be scattered, never to be gathered again by any section of the church. Some good men may be carried away by the influence of controversial excitement, personal regard for the individuals, or mistaken views of the case; but many turbulent spirits, impatient of control, will avail themselves of the opportunity, and become troublers in our Israel.

The "expelled Ministers" are endeavouring to create jealousy and disunion between the Pastors and the flock, as if their interests were not mutual and inseparable. The entire dependence of the Ministers on the voluntary support of the people, is a guarantee for the preservation of liberty. "The Conference as a body are dependent on public opinion, yet are independent of any individual or factious dictation." "The Connexion fears no democratic rage, and courts no aristocratic smile." While faithful to its solemn trust, it will repose in perfect safety under the protection of Almighty God.

These gentlemen complain of their "expulsion" as "illegal and unjust," though they are aware that it was in accordance with the Deed settled by Mr. Wesley, and enrolled in Her Majesty's High Court of Chancery, the provisions of which they knew when they became Ministers. By that Deed the majority of the Conference has power to expel any member "for any cause which the Conference may see fit or necessary." The Conference has no right to alter the nature of the "Trust" received from Mr. Wesley; but must transmit it to posterity in all its efficiency, unaltered and unimpaired. The Conference is "of the nature of a *chartered* Body, united and bound by the laws and regulations of the institution." The power which Wesleyan Ministers have the right to exercise over each other was legally settled in the case of Dr. Warren, who was suspended by a District-Meeting for contumacy, he refusing to take his trial. The Doctor appealed from his brethren, to whom he positively refused to submit, to the Vice-Chancellor, and the Lord Chancellor. In each case the decision was against him, and fully established and legalized the authority of our Church Courts. On this most important point Mr. Everett, in his *Life of Mr. Dawson*, page 403, after stating that he and Mr. Dawson had their fears as to the Institution at first, observes: "When, however, they found men passing over from the Theological Institution to the Wesleyan

Constitution, and trying to sap its foundation, they perceived it was high time to sacrifice mere *opinion* for the sake of *essentials*,—to give up an outwork or two for the sake of the *citadel*. Without entering into the merits of the question, which may now be considered as settled, one great good resulting from the whole, in the trial which ensued,—and the decision of Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst on the case,—is the act of legalizing the discipline of the Wesleyan Conference in reference to the Preachers, during the intervals of its sittings, and, to a certain extent, making the Wesleyan Constitution a part and parcel of the law of the land. The removal of a few factious spirits from the Body, who were dissatisfied with the system, was merely temporary; but this boon will go down to the latest posterity with British law; and in this invaluable boon Mr. Dawson rejoiced,—nor less the biographer.” The decision which was so gratifying to Mr. Everett, demonstrated the fact that it is neither un-English nor un-Wesleyan for a Methodist Court, composed only of Ministers, to inflict the highest penalty in its power for *contumacy*. On the occasion referred to, the Vice-Chancellor remarked,—“I do not myself think, that the accusations of tyranny, and violence, and malevolence, and so on, have been substantially made out.”

The Lord Chancellor stated, with reference to Dr. Warren and the District Meeting, “They suspended him, not because they found him guilty of the charges that had been preferred against him, but they suspended him because he refused to undergo the trial. He said, ‘I will not attend.’ They suspended him for contumacy; that is the fact.”

One sentence in his Lordship’s decision may enlighten Mr. Griffith on one point. Referring to the Large Minutes, the Chancellor observed, “It is quite obvious, on the face of that document itself, it was not intended as a transcript of the code of laws as then existing, but as a mere guide and assistant to the Preacher.”

From the decision here referred to, it is evident that the “law of 1835,” as it is called, had nothing to do with the recent proceedings of Conference: the power it has exercised was declared, by the highest legal authority in the land, to belong to it before the declaratory regulations of 1835 existed. The Conference acted upon the undoubted legalized right it has to question, and to deal with, any of its members, as the maintenance of

mutual confidence and the discipline and peace of the Connexion may require. Ministers have been expelled in former years, who could not have been convicted, but for their own admissions. These points have been well stated in the able pamphlets that have been published, especially in that by the President.

The expulsion of Mr. Everett was a very painful proceeding; but the Conference had been insulted and injured by some party, who, from a secret hiding-place, had set its authority at defiance, and attempted to destroy its peace and unity. Forbearance had been represented as a sign of weakness and disunion. The public had been appealed to, and great portions of the "Fly-Sheets" had been re-published in the "Test Act tested," and the "Fly-Sheets vindicated." It was asked, "Is it usual for any body of men to sit quiet under such imputations?" The boast was made, in No. 4, p. 22, "We are assured of final success. We have carried our mining operations under the whole citadel of misrule. Several explosions have already taken place. A few others will follow; and a heap of ruins will be all remaining of the great Babylon, which 'The Great I' has made. Guizot falls with his master. The adopted successor of Bunting, like Napoleon's son, will never ascend the throne of the empire."

It was known by some Ministers that Mr. Everett had been connected with the circulation of these injurious papers, and it was generally believed that he was well acquainted with the authors. Under these circumstances it was determined that Mr. Everett should be questioned on the subject. In such a case the brethren had a perfect right to require an explicit answer. Mutual confidence is the life of the Wesleyan ministry, and for its maintenance there must be a frankness and freedom that find no analogy in the proceedings of a criminal court.

The Conference and the people felt that some decisive step was absolutely necessary. As the authors illegally prevented direct proof being produced against them, it was thought that it would be best to resort to our constitutional mode of questioning those who were suspected. When the Conference had adopted this course, and Mr. Everett, after refusing to answer, had been told that his continuance in the Connexion depended on his submission to the decision of his brethren, Conference must either have determined to abide by its resolution, or utterly have given up its authority and stultified itself. If Mr.

Everett had declared his innocence, he would either have been retained, or have had a formal trial, with charges and witnesses. The attempt was not to make him criminate himself, but to obtain that satisfaction, without which his brethren could not regard him with confidence. Mr. Everett knew he was suspected, and that there were strong grounds for suspicion ; and he would not say that he had not anonymously attacked the Conference. Then that body had a right to say, "We can no longer recognise you as a brother Minister." The Conference, having determined to make inquiry, was bound to enforce its authority, whatever consequences might follow. Mr. Everett was warned and entreated not to force the Conference to proceed to his expulsion. It was proposed by Dr. Bunting to leave the case, in some sense, open for a year ; but there seemed to be, on Mr. Everett's part, such a determination not to yield in the least, and he so peremptorily refused even to meet the Conference again, as he was requested to do, that the proposition was set aside by the Conference. The course adopted was necessitated by circumstances such as never existed in Methodism before. To complain of the design being to make "a man criminate himself," seems like the letting out of a secret. If to answer the question would have "criminated" him, whose fault is that? If Mr. Everett regarded his position in Methodism of importance, he ought to have either stated his innocence as to the past, or to have given a promise as to the future.

This act of Conference is represented as "un-English and un-Wesleyan." It is neither the one nor the other. It is not un-English that articles of agreement between parties should be strictly acted upon. It cannot be un-Wesleyan, for it is in accordance with Mr. Wesley's own mode of proceeding, and with the rights he secured by Deed to the Conference.

It has been said to be an insult to ask a man if he is "guilty of maliciously slandering others." If there is the fullest circumstantial evidence of his having done so, his brethren have an undoubted right to question him.

The expulsion of Messrs. Dunn and Griffith differed in some respects from that of Mr. Everett. They were obstinate in their refusal to answer the question proposed.

A Committee was appointed to hear what they had to state, and to reason with them as to their past conduct, and present duty. They still remained positively deter-

mined not to submit to their brethren; and the Committee, after a patient consideration of the whole case, agreed, that the only conditions on which they could recommend the continuance of Messrs. Dunn and Griffith, were,—“First. That they be reprovèd from the Chair of the Conference, and be considered to be disqualified at present from being Circuit Superintendents. Second. That they fully satisfy the Conference, if not as to their recent conduct in the matters in question, yet, at least, as it respects the course they will pursue in future; and that, for this purpose, they give to the Conference an absolute and unequivocal pledge of their resolution at once to discontinue their publication of the ‘Wesley Banner,’ and their encouragement of other hostile and offensive publications; and that they also pledge themselves to abstain from taking part, directly or indirectly, in any agitating or divisive proceedings, which may be pursued by others, either as to recent acts of discipline, or as to the settled principles and laws of the Connexion.”

Wise and good men came to this decision in Committee; and it was adopted by the largest Conference, probably, ever held. The Conference had a legal right to proceed as it did in this case, and had Mr. Wesley’s advice and example on such subjects, to bear it out. That venerable man directed, in 1769, (see Minutes, vol. i., p. 88,) that after his death, all the Preachers should repair to London: “Let them draw up articles of agreement, to be signed by those who choose to act in *concert*. Let those be dismissed who do not choose it, in the most friendly manner possible.” Mr. Wesley put William Darney’s continuance as a Preacher on several conditions, one of which was, that he should “cease to print.” Even a slight acquaintance with Mr. Wesley’s writings and proceedings must convince an impartial inquirer, that he would never have allowed, on the part of any of his Preachers, the publication of such a periodical as the “Wesley Banner,” or such attacks on the brethren as those made in Mr. Kaye’s “Times.”

In the Conference of 1765 it was asked, “Ought we to insist upon our rule, that no Preacher print anything without your approbation?”

A. “Undoubtedly; and whoever does it for the time to come, cannot take it ill if he is excluded from our Connexion. Let every one take this warning, and afterwards blame none but himself.”

In the year after the "Plan of Pacification" had been adopted, the Conference came to the following conclusion:—"That, as the Preachers are eminently *one body*, nothing should be done by any one individual, which would be prejudicial to the whole, or any part thereof; therefore, *no Preacher shall publish anything* but what is given to the Conference, and printed in our own press. The Book-Committee to determine what is proper to be printed." (Minutes, vol. i., p. 345.) Though, for obvious reasons, this regulation has not been adhered to, it shows the power which Conference has over individual Ministers, and its right to interfere in any particular or objectionable case. If Mr. Dunn had a right to publish a "Banner" for his party, any man in the Connexion had the right of setting up a periodical, and giving to it a Connexional name. Mr. Dunn says, his "Banner" was set up because of the publication of "Papers on Wesleyan Matters."

When that plea was urged by Mr. Dunn, the Editors gave notice that the "Papers on Wesleyan Matters" should at once be discontinued. The one publication being given up, the other ought not to have been continued. The District-Committee declared that the "Banner" tended to promote "strifes and divisions," "resolved that it ought to be discontinued; and required Mr. Dunn immediately to suspend its publication." This he stubbornly refused, both at the District-Meeting and the Conference, though the Stewards of a very respectable Circuit, who had intimated to Mr. Dunn their wish to have him stationed in their Circuit the following year, had subsequently informed him that the Editorship of the "Banner" would prevent their requesting him. Ministers and people saw the impropriety of such a publication; but he would not yield.

It is asserted, that the "Papers on Wesleyan Matters" were worse than the "Fly-Sheets." This is not true; for though one or two articles might have objectionable passages in them, others were written with great wisdom, and in the best spirit. I do not know who the Editors were, but they certainly did not take the "Fly-Sheets" as their model. They wrote in a very different spirit, and with a far better design. They called for full and open investigation on all subjects affecting the interests of the Connexion. They gave the names of their publishers. They defended measures and parties grossly misrepresented in the "Fly-Sheets;" and rather than give offence, or seem to justify the continuance of the "Banner," they avowed

the intention of immediately discontinuing their publication ; setting Mr. Dunn a good example, which he, however, had no disposition to follow. Messrs. Dunn and Griffith were also required to discontinue any "encouragement of other hostile and offensive publications." The Conference has a right to make such a requirement in case of any of its Ministers. There was no reference to political opinions in this decision. Wesleyan Ministers, as well as members, claim the right of judging for themselves on these points ; but members of the Conference are not at liberty to aid, by their influence and their writings, publications of any kind which are "hostile" to the cause they are solemnly pledged to support.

Nor can it be considered proper that when any particular act of discipline has been determined upon by the votes of nearly all present, a minority of two or three shall be at liberty to carry on a system of agitation in opposition to the decision of their brethren. It may appear plausible to claim the rights and privileges of Englishmen, and to call such restrictions "cruel," "inquisitorial," "tyrannical," &c. ; but in all public bodies minorities must submit to the decisions of majorities. I have no right whatever to use my personal liberty in opposing a measure, and encouraging agitation on the subject, after it has been decided by all but the unanimous vote of the body to which I have promised submission. Messrs. Dunn and Griffith might have remained members of the Conference without giving up their liberty, or violating their conscientious principles. They were only required to abstain from what no Methodist Minister ever had the right of doing, and what must necessarily be mischievous if allowed. A man who enjoys the privilege of union with a public body, must give up some portion of his personal liberty. If these gentlemen think separation from the Connexion a great hardship, they should have consented to make the easy promise of future good conduct. Refusing, under the circumstances, to do that, the forfeiture of their position with the Conference was the necessary result. Either they must yield, or the Conference could not retain them without giving up its authority and injuring its character ; and painful as expulsion is, it is a less evil than would be involved in permitting any individual to set it at defiance, or refuse submission to its decisions.

If the "expelled Ministers" really think the Conference so bad as they represent, removal from it cannot be any great calamity. These *liberal* men can have no sympathy with "Romish domination and cruelty." It is a wonder they continued in the Conference for so many years, and did not leave it of their own accord. Why is all this clamour raised about expulsion from a body with whom it cannot be any honour to be united? Either they do not think the Conference so bad as they would have people believe, or to them expulsion must be a matter of little consequence. I innocently thought, until very lately, that "Romish cruelty" was something more than merely leaving men to themselves, who would not submit to the decisions of their brethren; and that a "horrid inquisition" was an affair from which men would be glad to escape! It is a wilful and unjust misrepresentation of the Wesleyan Conference to compare its proceedings to those of an apostate church, which tortures and destroys men for maintaining the rights of conscience, and refusing submission to her authority. Those who use such strong terms to catch the unwary, know that they cannot be borne out by fact.

The late Rev. Richard Watson, contrasting voluntary communions with state churches, observes,—“Those who possess the governing power in such churches, are always under the influence of public opinion to an extent unfelt in establishments. They can enforce nothing felt to be oppressive to the members in general, without dissolving the society itself; and their utmost power extends to excision from the body, which, unlike the sentences of excommunication in state churches, is wholly unconnected with civil penalties.” “The very terms often used in the grand controversy arising out of the struggle for the establishment of religious liberty with national and intolerant churches, are not generally appropriate to such discussions as may arise in voluntary religious societies, although they are often employed, either carelessly or *ad captandum*, to serve the purposes of faction.”

The late Rev. Andrew Fuller, writing on liberty, after stating that in the government of a nation some union of sentiment is required, observes, “In *smaller societies*, where persons unite for the purpose of obtaining certain ends, it is always expected that they should agree in certain leading principles necessary to the accomplishment

of those ends. Hence, there is scarcely a society formed without articles, testifying the agreement of the members in certain fundamental particulars. It is supposed to be a leading principle of a *common club*, that the lesser number of members should, in all matters of debate, submit to the greater. Now just suppose any one member should dissent from the rules ; common sense suggests the necessity of his being convinced or excluded. But it seems a Christian society has not the authority of a common club."

Mr. Eckett, referring to the "proceedings of Conference," remarks, "More of freedom of inquiry may be exercised by Christian brethren, in cases of suspicion, in reference to those belonging to the fraternity, than would be proper to be allowed in our public courts of justice." "If, in the Connexion to which I belong, such charges against any of the Ministers or other members of our Connexion, were anonymously circulated, and there were strong suspicions that some of its itinerant Ministers were the authors and circulators of such charges, I should not think it improper that inquiry should be instituted for the purpose of discovering the authors ; and I think that the circumstances might justify our Annual Assembly in requiring the suspected persons to give categorical answers to inquiries relative to the authorship of such anonymous accusations." "Unless it can be made to appear that the question, which the Conference required to be answered, could not be answered without violating some obligation, superior to that which requires each member of the Conference to render submission to the will of the majority, I do not regard it as either un-English or unjust to subject to punishment those who refuse to answer."

The "Free-Church Magazine" for October gives the following view of the case:—"When a man joins a church, especially as an office-bearer, he receives certain privileges, in return for which he submits to certain restrictions on his liberty. To claim the privileges and repudiate the restrictions, or to employ the privileges for the injury of the body conferring them, would be equally unjust and unreasonable. Now it seems very reasonable, on this principle, that a church court should have the right of questioning a member in regard to anything injurious to the interests of the church, believed to have been done by him. In the Wesleyan church, moreover, the right to question the brethren in regard to their ministerial conduct, is one expressly claimed, and frequently exercised. And, fur-

ther, the peculiar circumstances of the present case were such as to baffle the ordinary methods of investigation. Certain very serious charges, affecting the character of eminent brethren, had virtually been published, but in such a way as to give no direct clue to the parties who had circulated them. It was impossible that this should be allowed to continue; and when suspicion was strongly attached to particular individuals, it was natural that they should be called upon, and ready, either to vindicate the position they had taken up, or to clear themselves if they were innocent, or to confess if they were guilty. At all events, there was nothing in this proceeding to justify the charge of inquisitorial tyranny, which has been brought so strongly against the Conference."

All such testimonies are rejected, and it is alleged that the expulsion of these gentlemen is unscriptural; but that remains to be proved. Matt. xviii. 15—17, does not prove it. This refers to a case of personal offence; but the attack complained of was made upon a public body, in an anonymous and illegal manner; it had become a matter of public scandal. The Conference could not go in a body to Mr. Everett, therefore he was summoned to the Conference. The whole body of Ministers were concerned in this matter, and they had a right to be satisfied.

Ministers had privately spoken to Mr. Everett, but could obtain no satisfaction. The Conference could only deal with him, under the circumstances, by strictly questioning him; and he was bound by the laws of Christ to give satisfaction to an aggrieved and injured brotherhood.

It is scriptural that government should be lodged somewhere in a church, and be enforced and obeyed. It is singular to find persons constantly referring to the law of Christ, and at the same time violating every principle, not only of Scripture, but of honour and consistency, by violent attacks on absent persons, and that among the enemies of religion.

The whole "Fly-Sheet" proceeding was in direct violation of the letter and spirit of the Gospel. The Conference, the injured party, was compelled to notice this mischievous conduct, or betray its important trust.

Those passages of Scripture which forbid evil speaking, strife, and discord, justify the determination of Conference to endeavour to put an end to these evils, and to disown

the men who would not promise to behave peaceably towards their brethren. The Conference did not appeal to those that are without, but gave an opportunity to the suspected persons to put themselves right with itself; and those who loudly complain before mixed audiences against Conference, and systematically seek to destroy the influence of eminent and useful Ministers, are the parties acting in open violation of the precepts of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The ministry is solemnly bound to use all possible means for the preservation of the church's purity and peace. This can be done only when discipline is firmly maintained throughout the body.

The passage of Scripture (Deut. xxi. 1—7) quoted on the obverse of the title-page, will serve to show that it is not inconsistent with the law of God to require an explicit declaration from certain parties when an evil has been committed, and the author is unknown. The Elders of Israel were not at liberty to refuse to answer for themselves, if the slain man was found near to their city. They must all purge themselves from suspicion in the presence of the Priests, by declaring distinctly their own innocence, and their utter ignorance of the guilty person. No Elder in these circumstances was allowed impertinently to turn round, and try to beard the Priests who were present, by demanding the reasons why he was suspected, and the evidence of his guilt. They were bound to give a categorical answer in the following terms:—"OUR HANDS HAVE NOT SHED THIS BLOOD, NEITHER HAVE OUR EYES SEEN IT." Nothing more than a simple declaration of this kind was required from Mr. Everett. Refusing this, he justly forfeited the confidence of his brethren.

An outcry is raised against the regulations of 1835, as though they had borne cruelly on the expelled Ministers; and the "Fly-Sheets vindicated" asserts, that "the law of '35 is anti-Wesley, as well as anti-Christ." These Ministers declare it to be "false in its statements, and wicked in its principles," a law "steeped in apostasy and unbelief."

Why did Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith quietly submit to have the regulations of 1835 recognised as part and parcel of the laws of Methodism for so many years, without uttering a complaint? Did they never find out the evil till they ceased to be Wesleyan Ministers? Mr. Everett acted upon the "law of '35" in the May District

Meeting at Newcastle, in the year 1837. In a case which afterwards led to a "Meeting for Brotherly Inquiry," Mr. Everett claimed the right of questioning a Minister, without charge and without notice. We do not complain of that; but Mr. Everett should not now denounce as iniquitous a course which he himself has publicly adopted. Perhaps he only found out that it was oppressive when it came to be applied to himself. Messrs. Dunn and Griffith were formally received into connexion with the Conference in the year 1836, the first Conference after the declaratory regulations of 1835 had been put into their hands in the Minutes. Mr. Dunn had travelled fourteen years, but had not been formally received, in consequence of some scruples on a point of doctrine. In the Conference of 1836 he and Mr. Griffith avowed themselves Wesleyan Methodists on all points. They professed satisfaction with the laws and regulations of the Connexion, and promised to observe and enforce them; a promise which they have, in fact, virtually repeated every year of their ministry. New circumstances often create new light. The declaratory regulations of 1835 are not, as sometimes represented, opposed to the rights conceded in 1797; they are explanatory of those concessions, and an enlargement of them.

As the nature and design of the regulations in question are misrepresented for party purposes, I will give as brief and complete a view as I can of the arrangements relating to *Finance, Discipline, and Meetings for communicating with Conference.*

I. In respect to Finances, or money matters. In 1797 it was determined to publish an account of the Yearly Collection, of the affairs of Kingswood school; and that all bills for the support of Travelling Preachers, and their families, relating to the Contingent Fund, should be passed by the Quarterly Meeting, and forwarded to the District Committee. In 1835 the Conference resolved, that the entire portion of the business of the Contingent Fund, not arranged in the presence of the Stewards at the District Meeting, should be confided to a mixed Committee, consisting of fifteen Preachers, chosen by Conference, and fifteen laymen, chosen exclusively by Circuit Stewards; and that one of the Treasurers should in future be a lay-member of the Society. To this Committee is confided the duty of examining and regulating the affairs of the Children's Fund.

The distribution of the Preachers' Auxiliary Fund is intrusted to a Committee, consisting of an equal number of Preachers and laymen. (See Minutes, vol. vii., pp. 576, 577.) All local contributions are paid into the hands of lay-officers, to whom Ministers have to account for every shilling received; and the connexional contributions are now, in every case, committed to the management of mixed Committees, one half the number in each being laymen.

II. As to Discipline.

1. With regard to Ministers, it is asked, "Is it expedient, on account of recent occurrences, to re-assert, by Declaratory Resolutions, any of our rules or usages, which individuals have attempted to contradict or pervert?"

"We think it is expedient; and therefore the Conference *unanimously* DECLARES as follows; viz.,

"(1.) That not only the Conference, but all its District Committees, whether ordinary or special, possess the undoubted right of instituting, in their official and collective character, any inquiry or investigation which it may deem expedient, into the moral, Christian, or ministerial conduct of the Preachers under their care, even although no formal or regular accusation may have been previously announced on the part of any individual; and that they have also the authority of coming to such decisions thereupon as to them may seem most conformable to the laws of the New Testament, and to the rules and usages of our Connexion. In the District Meetings, especially, the Chairman has the official right of originating such inquiries, if he think necessary; because our rule declares, that 'the Chairman of each District, in conjunction with his brethren of the Committee, shall be *responsible* to the Conference for the execution of the laws, as far as his District is concerned.'

"(2.) That all Preachers who desire to remain in ministerial communion with us, are considered as retaining that communion on the distinct condition, that they hold themselves individually pledged to submit, in a peaceable and Christian spirit, to the usual disciplinary investigations, not only of the Conference, but of all its District Committees, whether ordinary or special, when summoned according to our rules and usages; and that any Preacher who refuses to submit to the friendly examination of the Chairman and of other brethren, or to take his trial, regularly and formally, before the Preach-

ers, either of an ordinary or of a special District Committee, when duly required so to do, shall be considered as *ipso facto* incurring the penalty of suspension until the ensuing Conference; because no possible security can be found even against the worst forms of moral or ministerial delinquency, if persons charged with any misconduct, and summoned to trial, be allowed to evade with impunity our established modes of investigation."

2. As it affects members of society. On this point the Conference of 1835 made the following statements:—

"Explanations of the rules which relate to the exclusion of members of society are now given, and certain additional securities afforded to our people in this respect. We have also modified the rules which secure to our people the liberty of addressing memorials to the Conference; and have increased the facilities by which they may express their wishes, or find a redress of any grievance of which they may be disposed to complain."

"During the life of Mr. Wesley, and for a short period afterwards, the Superintendent (formerly called the 'Assistant') possessed, according to the primitive rules and established usage of the Connexion, the entire and unrestricted power of excluding from the society any members whom, on account of their habitual and persevering violation of the laws of God, or of any of our general rules, he judged to be improper for our Christian communion."

In 1794 it was agreed "that the Preachers should consult the Stewards and Leaders, before they proceeded to any act of expulsion;" and also, that "no Trustee (however accused, or defective in conforming to the established rules of the society) shall be removed from the society unless his crime or breach of the rules of the society be *proved in the presence of the Trustees and Leaders.*"

In 1797 it was enacted, that *no person* should be expelled for immorality, till such immorality had been "*proved at a Leaders' Meeting;*" or, as afterwards explained, "*proved to the satisfaction*" of the Leaders' Meeting. This refers, of course, to persons who *demand a trial*. If there be no denial of the fact, or defence against the charge, the ticket is withheld by the Preacher; and there the matter ends.

The Conference of 1835, while maintaining unaltered the right of the Superintendent to give judgment, in cases where guilt had been proved to the "satisfaction of the

Leaders' Meeting," adopted certain "guards and securities" to the people, which had not existed before. It was resolved, "No sentence of expulsion shall hereafter be pronounced by any Superintendent *in the same Meeting* at which the trial shall have taken place."

This is to prevent all undue severity, and to afford time for deliberation and inquiry. "In difficult or doubtful cases, the Superintendent is now further directed not to proceed to the actual sentence of expulsion, without privately asking information from such individual Leaders, or other judicious and experienced members of the society, as are most likely to put him into full possession of all the circumstances necessary to his forming, with due discretion and caution, his own final judgment on the subject." Besides this guard, the Superintendent is required to consult his colleagues, and to have their opinion and advice before proceeding to expulsion in any case. In all cases of dissatisfaction with the sentence of expulsion, the aggrieved person has still the right of appeal to the District Meeting and to the Conference.

In addition to this, the right of appeal to a Minor District Meeting, if more convenient than either of the other courses, was extended to members. The Conference also gave to a Superintendent, who might be factiously opposed by a Leaders' Meeting, the same right of appeal to a Minor District Meeting that was given to members. This did not give a new power to Superintendents, but prevented the necessity of calling a special District Meeting, as appointed in 1791, 1792, and confirmed in 1797. It is supposed that, in most cases, Minor District Committees will be sufficient to "settle everything till the Conference." If not, there is still the power of calling a special District Meeting, to which two Ministers from any other District may be added by each party. The right of appeal to the Conference from the decisions of this, as of all other inferior jurisdictions, is reserved to all parties.

The Conference of 1835 declared: "With respect to the *essential principles and fundamental* regulations of our established discipline, we are unanimously and deliberately resolved in the fear of God, and on the most conscientious conviction of duty, to make no change whatever; but to walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing." (Minutes, vol. vii., p. 550.)

III. Meetings for communication with Conference.

We are aware of no one particular in which the liberties of the people are abridged on these points. But we regard the change as a decided improvement.

In 1797 the Conference thought that other formal meetings, "besides the Leaders' and Quarterly Meetings, in general, would be contrary to the Methodist economy, and very prejudicial in their consequences." It was, however, allowed "that other formal meetings might be held," if they received "the approbation of the Superintendent and the Leaders' or Quarterly Meeting." The Superintendent had the power of a *veto* in reference to the calling of such meetings; but in 1835, that power was "wholly repealed and abolished."

By the regulations of that year the Superintendent is *required* to give the Stewards the opportunity of calling a *special Circuit Meeting* in June, if it be judged necessary or desirable. In 1835, the constitution of this meeting was defined. "It is to include all the Ministers of the Circuit; the Circuit-Stewards; the Steward of the town society, and of all the societies (if there be more than one) in the Circuit-town; one of the Stewards of each of those other societies which were entered on the latest Circuit-Schedule as containing fifty members or upwards; the male Class-Leaders in the Circuit, of *ten years' continuous and uninterrupted standing* in that office; the Local Preachers in the Circuit, of the same *continuous and uninterrupted standing*, since they were first placed on the Plan as Local Preachers *fully admitted*; the Trustees of the chapel or chapels of the Circuit-towns, (if regularly settled, and so secured to the use of the Connection,) *being members* of the society; and one of the Trustee-Treasurers or Trustee-Stewards of every other regularly-settled and secured chapel in the Circuit, *being a member* of the society." This gives sufficient scope, and secures a complete representation of all the interests in a Circuit. There will, on an average, be at least twenty laymen to one Minister. The admission of only those Leaders and Local Preachers who have held office ten years, is a judicious arrangement. Men are not fit to legislate until their judgment has been, in some measure, matured by experience. The Ministers are not allowed to vote on the most important questions in Conference, until they have travelled fourteen years. That will, in most cases, be sixteen or eighteen years after their becoming Local Preachers.

The power of the *special meeting* is as great as Wesleyan Methodism ever recognised from the beginning: "Any member thereof may propose for consideration, as before stated, the propriety of memorializing the Conference respecting the repeal or alteration of any of our existing laws, or the enactment of any additional rule. Such memorial, if approved by a majority of the persons present, shall be signed *forthwith* by the individuals who concur in its adoption, and then immediately placed in the hands of the Superintendent, who is made responsible for its delivery personally or otherwise to the President of the Conference, on or before the second day of its ensuing session."

It has been objected that the time is too limited, only three days being allowed in which the meeting can take place. It does not appear that in any case since 1835, one day has been taken up by discussions on these topics. In fact, very few Circuits have held such meetings, the great mass of them being perfectly satisfied with the constitution, and with its general administration. After a storm, which caused the separation of a considerable number from the Wesleyan society, the churches had rest, "and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were edified." There are this year in the Wesleyan society nearly 112,000 more members than there were in the year 1834, and 285 more Ministers.

"Notice must be given in writing to the Superintendent, who is Chairman, for the information of all who desire it, at least three days before the day of meeting, of the precise subject on which it is intended to propose that any memorial shall be sent to the Conference; and no proposal of which such timely notice has not been given, shall be allowed to be brought forward for that year." This is just to all parties concerned, and requisite to the securing of fair and honourable discussion.

"All memorials requesting any change in our laws, shall be limited to such changes only as are consistent with the *essential principles* of Wesleyan Methodism, and within the pale of our *established constitution*." The memorials are limited to "such rules only as have operated, or are intended to operate, *in the government of the societies at large*."

The Conference also limited these meetings to their own Circuits. These limitations were wisely determined, and were strictly necessary. To meet every year

to discuss the principles of the Wesleyan constitution would be manifestly ridiculous. To give an opportunity to such a gentleman, for instance, as the Editor of Mr. Kaye's "Times," to call for an "Entire Revision," would be perfectly preposterous. He, in the abundance of his Wesleyan knowledge, and the plenitude of his editorial power, finds no great difficulty in mending our constitution ; but says, "That entire revision which we propose must begin with the Deed of Declaration." Does the Editor know that the Deed referred to is a legal document, the validity of which the highest authority in the land has attested, and by which the Wesleyan chapels throughout the country are secured to the people for whom they were built ?

The rules by which the Ministers exercise discipline upon each other, cannot be open to such discussion : that pertains exclusively to the parties themselves. A Local Preachers' Meeting is not interfered with by a Leaders' Meeting, or a School Committee. Every Wesleyan Minister must place himself in the hands of his brethren, and be governed, in conformity with established rules, by the majority. If this principle were not fully maintained, the Connexion itself would speedily come to an end.

It is a prudential and proper arrangement for each Circuit to attend to its own affairs. It would be most injurious, in a Connexion like ours, to encourage itinerant agitators. The Circuits are competent to attend to their own concerns, and do not need the interference of strangers, and must not be left exposed to the influence of designing or even of mistaken men.

The following is the closing sentence of these regulations : "With these necessary limitations, the Superintendents are directed to allow, in meetings constituted as aforesaid, the free and friendly discussions of our people, and to take charge of any memorial from them, couched in proper and respectful terms."

It was the honest purpose of the Conference to facilitate the means of access by the people to the Conference ; and I am greatly mistaken, if a perfectly unbiassed and careful examination of the whole document, as issued in 1835, would not lead to the settled conviction that in all these respects Methodism as it is has in it more of the popular element than Methodism as it was even in 1797 ; for, beside these appointed and recognised means of approaching Conference, the right is continued to individual

members of forwarding useful intelligence and information to the District Committees and Conference "on whatever concerns themselves or their people." From Leaders' or Quarterly Meetings "the Conference will receive communications, whenever they deem it *necessary* to make them, on subjects connected with *the proper business of their own societies, or of their own Circuits*, respectively."

If the regulations of 1835 were annihilated, the Conference would possess precisely the same power which it exercised at its last session,—a power it will neither modify nor give up. The Ministers would be under the control of their brethren as they have always been; but the members would have their privileges abridged by the alteration.

These regulations do not bear oppressively upon the people. Their rights are secure. The Conference cannot dispose of a single Connexional Fund. No man can be placed in the office of Preacher, Steward, or Leader, without the consent of a majority of persons in the Meeting to which he belongs. The Quarterly Meeting must signify its approval of a Candidate for the ministry, before the Conference can receive him on trial.

It is rather difficult to ascertain distinctly what are the objects sought by these gentlemen; they commenced with the statement, that they wished for no change in the constitution; the evil was only in the administration. This sentiment was re-echoed through the country, and made prominent in almost all the meetings. The people were assured that there was no system like Methodism, and they were urged not to secede. A few alterations were necessary; but they did not affect the system. The "law of 1835," which is represented as cruel, despotic, and inquisitorial, is to be rescinded. This has become the general cry in the meetings. The people are urged to call for its removal from our statute-book, not because it exposes *them* to the inconvenience of being questioned without formal trial, but because it is said to be oppressive to the ministry. If it really did interfere with the personal liberty of the Ministers, they are the parties to complain, and they have in their own hands the power to settle the question as it affects themselves. Officers or members of society have security for their rights, in that none of them can be expelled without their guilt having been proved at a Leaders'-Meeting. If any attempt of the kind should be made, the injured party has the right

of appeal to a Minor or Special District-Meeting, or, if necessary, to the Conference itself, as has been shown.

Strong statements are made with reference to the decisions of the Manchester Minor District-Meeting, in the published speeches of the "expelled Ministers," as well as in various documents. In the "Fly-Sheets Vindicated," p. 152, the finding of this court is referred to, and it is said that "it makes discipline a farce, censure an honour, and expulsion a boon." "It allies itself to the worst periods of society. It is despotism. It has its parallel in the horrible reign of terror in France, in 1793." If the writer believed his own assertions, he ought not to have continued in the Wesleyan society. If he did not believe them, he deserved putting away as a public slanderer. There is great misrepresentation in the whole account given of this Minor District Meeting, as is evident in the fact, that, when the whole case was presented to the Conference, the reception of the Report was moved by the venerable R. Reece, and seconded by Dr. Dixon, of whom the "Fly-Sheet" writers remarked, that, when he came out, "he would come out like a giant." That Report the Conference received and confirmed, after an investigation of the whole matter.

It is proposed that laymen alone should be appointed as Treasurers of all our funds. This is an unseemly and injurious insinuation. Are Christian Ministers, even when associated with laymen, not to be trusted? Will people commit the all-important interests of their souls to men who are suspected of treachery in temporal affairs? To attempt to create distrust of Ministers as to pecuniary affairs is gross injustice. In order to excite suspicion, the unhappy case of a ministerial Treasurer is perpetually brought before an excited and misled public.

It is not stated by these parties to the audiences they address, that the person alluded to was generally reported to be a wealthy, as well as an upright, man. Nothing like this solitary case has occurred in Methodism during a century. When the melancholy facts became known, they were dealt with, and the defaulter was visited with the highest penalty which Methodism could inflict.

It is a praiseworthy act of the Ministers *voluntarily* to become responsible for the whole amount of public deficiency; thus proving that Wesleyan Ministers as a body, though poor, have a nice sense of honour and integrity.

Lay Treasurers have been known to prove unfaithful ; but where is an instance of self-denial, such as is involved in this resolve of the Conference, to meet the deficiency ?

The present arrangement gives the best security that can possibly be furnished.

The Nomination Committee is to be set aside, and Connexional Committees to be chosen by ballot. This would indeed be “a *simple* change.” Though a Committee *nominates*, the Conference *appoints*, and is fully competent to the faithful discharge of its duty, without requiring the secrecy of the ballot. There is honour and integrity enough in the Conference to do what is consistent and proper in an open and becoming manner. Besides, it is stated in the “Fly-Sheets” that the Conference is wonderfully liberalized and improved since 1845.

These changes are all that the first manifesto includes, and all that the parties who have joined in the agitation generally are committed to. If these are the main points on which the contest is to hinge, are they worth the risk involved in the struggle ? Ought the proper work of the Connexion, the conversion of sinners, and the building up of believers, to be superseded by contention and strife, which may involve the eternal ruin of many souls, merely for the accomplishment of objects so trivial and superficial ? The contingent benefit promised by the proposers, is no adequate compensation for the positive evils which must necessarily arise from fierce and unrestrained agitation. If the Connexion thought these objects desirable, there is a safe, quiet, and constitutional course open, which would secure what agitation never can promote.

I find that very recently a new point has been introduced by these gentlemen,—“lay delegation.” Did they intend this at first, and only keep it back till those who wish for no change in the constitution had become committed to them ? Or has new light come upon them in consequence of not meeting with the response they expected to their first manifesto ? The proposition comes rather ungraciously as an after-thought ; but it would be still more censurable if it had been intended from the beginning, and only held in reserve for a purpose. One or other of these suppositions must be correct ; but in the absence of evidence as to which is the fact, I give no opinion on that subject.

It seems remarkable that this topic should be introduced now, and that this change in the constitution

should be declared essential by those who set out with most explicit declarations of attachment to that system, and of opposition to any infringement of it in any way whatever. The "Fly-Sheet" writers seem to have a sort of instinctive horror of lay-influence, and Dr. Bunting, who has done more to connect laymen with the working of Methodism than any other man ever attempted, is on that account held up to ridicule. It is said, "The Conference is nothing; the lay-lords are the Connexion!" "Dr. Bunting now felt the need of the lay-aristocracy, which he had long laboured to establish, and into whose hands, as in Kilhamitism, the Connexion is in danger of falling." At one time Dr. Bunting is a domineering tyrant, and at another, when it suits the party, he is imitating "Kilhamitism," and allowing "lay-lords" to govern him and the Conference, and thus endangering the Connexion. "Consistency, whither art thou fled?"

Now, if this representation be true of a respectable body like the New Connexion,—if this point, in which they differ from us, is really one of such danger to Ministers and people as is here intimated, we ought by all means to avoid it, and most resolutely oppose all innovations of that character. Our friends of the New Connexion have *one* layman to one Minister sent to Conference. The Editor of Mr. Kaye's "Times" is of opinion, that is not enough, there ought to be "two laymen to one Minister" in our Conference. So that, on the showing of the "Fly-Sheets," we should be doubly ruined! Ruin would indeed be inevitable if these "Reformers" were to be allowed to remodel our now beautifully balanced constitution. As these gentlemen do not seem to have fixed in their own minds how far change is to be attempted, we would advise all the friends of social order and real improvement to wait till they can know with certainty to what they are to be committed by joining in the agitation.

On the subject of "Delegation," the Conference in 1797 made the following declaration: "The Conference, having maturely considered the subject, are thoroughly persuaded, with many of our societies, whose letters have been read in full Conference, that they cannot admit any but regular Travelling Preachers into their body, either in the Conference or District-Meetings, and preserve the system of Methodism entire, particularly the itinerant plan, which they are determined to support." (Minutes, vol. i., p. 379.)

The same feeling prevailed in the Conference of 1835. "While the Conference is disposed to pay a just regard to any suggestion relative to the better administration of our discipline, it has determined to make no alteration in those parts of our system which it has ever considered essential to the very existence of the Connexion." (Minutes, vol. vii., p. 548.) And in that year more than *two hundred* "lay members," belonging to the principal Circuits in the Connexion, signed a "Declaration," from which the following is an extract: "We state it as our deliberate and conscientious opinion, that it is the imperative duty of the Connexion, faithfully and steadfastly, to adhere to the great and long-established principles of original Methodism; and more particularly to those which prevent the introduction of lay-delegates into the Methodist Conference,—which secure our Connexional union,—which provide for the due exercise of the scriptural powers of the pastoral office,—and which guarantee the purity and efficiency of the Christian ministry, by confiding to the Conference the care of its own members." (See Minutes, vol. vii., p. 563.) During the same year a "Declaration" was put forth by nearly one hundred officers residing in Staffordshire, in which the following statement is made: "For lay-delegation, so warmly eulogized and earnestly recommended by some as the sovereign remedy for every abuse, and the correction of every evil, we have no wish; and having carefully marked its operation on other religious communities, and calculated its probable influence upon our own, we wish for ourselves to remain exempt from its supposed advantages."

These are noble testimonies from such men, and are especially valuable at the present time, when the principles of Wesleyan Methodism are so rudely attacked; and the people, generally, are misrepresented as sympathizing with sentiments the very opposite to those stated above. On the important question here involved, a few remarks may not be out of place. It is said that those who contribute to support a system, have a right to share in the *management* of its affairs. If this principle always held good where support was compulsory, it would by no means follow that it must necessarily be the case in a voluntary association, in which each individual is at liberty to withdraw the moment he is dissatisfied with the system. Besides, the temporal affairs of each society are almost exclusively in the hands of laymen; and all the Connex-

ional Funds are controlled by mixed Committees; as I have previously stated, pages 35, 36.

Another ground taken is, that it is dangerous for Ministers to possess exclusive legislative power. In the Church of Rome, this power has become most cruel and oppressive. There never has been, or can be, anything analogous to that in the Wesleyan Conference; it possesses no political power, nor can it inflict a temporal punishment; it has the right to separate from itself those who will not conform to its conditions,—a common benefit society has that privilege. Constant reference is made to the balance of power which ought to be maintained between Ministers and people. Our system at present secures that. The Ministers can have no one interest apart from the people; the dependence must be mutual as long as Wesleyan Methodism exists. Methodism rests on sound principles; and, like the rocking-stones found in some localities, nicely balanced on immovable masses of rock, so poised, that the hand of a child may move them, yet so secure, that no power can overthrow them that does not affect the basis,—that exactness of balance which subjects our system to an appearance of danger, really secures it from injury.

The power which laymen now possess in Wesleyan Methodism, renders “Delegation” *unnecessary*. All the Connexional Committees have laymen on them in equal numbers to Ministers. Each Circuit has its Stewards, who are elected by the Ministers and officers conjointly; and they, with the Superintendents, are the official guardians of the rights and interests of all parties concerned.

Lay-delegation in a large society constituted as ours is, will be seen to be utterly impracticable. The “Deed” does not admit of it. So serious an alteration cannot be made, unless all parties concerned are agreed, and that is never likely to be the case. (See Lay-Declarations on the subject.) One Minister to each Circuit, on the average, independent of official men, would be found to be as many as could conveniently be accommodated by the friends in Conference towns. If each Circuit sent a layman in addition, on the average, the number would be about nine hundred. Who would provide for them? and how would their expenses be paid? If the Circuits are to pay for this new arrangement, it will cost several thousands a year, in addition to all that is now contributed. If the Delegates are to pay for their honour, then caste

must be introduced; poor men, however eminent for piety or intellect, cannot be chosen; but the dreaded "aristocracy of Methodism," the class that has ruined the New-Connexion according to the "Fly-Sheet" writers, would be the sole representatives. It would certainly create a greater distinction between the rich and the poor than has ever yet existed in Methodism. Let the masses of our people think of that fact.

In what proportion could delegation be appointed? If each Circuit is to have one lay-representative, the arrangement is thoroughly and manifestly unjust, as we have one Circuit with forty-one members, and another with three thousand and fifty-eight. If the small Circuits are denied the right of representation, while it is conceded to others, they will have just cause of complaint; for, after all, if there is any plea for delegation, it must be on behalf of the smaller Circuits. On the other hand, if forty-one members have a right to send a Delegate, how many ought York to send with more than three thousand members? Suppose York to send two, as, probably, two Ministers on the average will attend, then thirty Circuits might be found, the combined members of which would not be equal to the society in York; to have two Delegates for those thirty Circuits would be worse than none, to have one for each place would be a great injustice to the larger Circuits. For Circuits receiving support—and this applies to almost one half—to have equal representative rights with those furnishing that support, would be singularly unfair, because the Circuits unable to meet the small claims at present coming upon them, could do nothing towards meeting the expenses of lay-delegation. What is to be said on behalf of the hundred thousand members on the foreign stations and in Canada? Nearly one-fourth of the members would be excluded from all participation in this wonderful scheme. Are Local Preachers, Leaders, and School Committees prepared to allow of similar changes in their meetings? It is no unkind reflection on any party to say, that lay-delegation has never yet accomplished half the good that was anticipated; and there seems to be, from the history of other sections of the Methodist family, no great temptation to adopt the change proposed. No offence is meant by referring to other societies who have adopted the plan of lay-delegation; but as they represent that as a most important principle, it is fair to test the working of the different systems.

In 1798 the New Connexion began with more than 5,000 members; now that it has celebrated its jubilee it has 20,384. Our own society had, in that year, at home and abroad, 113,598 members; there are now in connexion with the British Conference 492,509 members, including those in Canada, being an increase of 378,911. The Association has existed since 1835; and it is stated that 20,000 separated from the Conference that year. It cannot be supposed that the Association gathered in the whole of that number, but it has now 21,564 members. Since that separation the Wesleyan society has had a net increase of 111,722 members. The system cannot be a very bad one which is producing such results.

In the manner in which "the expelled Ministers" are attempting to accomplish their object, there is much to deprecate and deplore. They have determined to hold agitating meetings all over the country. These meetings are thrown open to enemies as well as friends of Methodism; the most irreligious have as easy access as members of society. It must be truly gratifying to those who have been put away from us for various causes, and to men who despise all religion, to listen to the virulent attacks made on the Conference, and on eminent and useful Ministers. Meetings for the promotion of agitation are held in places where comparatively few sympathize with the attacks made on our system or our executive. If the object sought was the improvement of the Connexion, one would imagine that a course at once more consistent and more safe would have been adopted. To excite "all sorts and conditions of men" by statements about "inquisitors" and "cells," the "Romish tyranny" of some Ministers, and the "abject slavery" of others, and all this with a professedly earnest desire of correcting the abuses of the Connexion, and opening the eyes of the poor deluded people, is the way to dissolve friendships, awaken animosities, and wound the cause of Christ; but not to produce real improvement in the society, or in individuals. Contrasts are drawn between "Methodism as it was," and "as it is," as though it was sadly degenerated, and had substituted slavery for freedom. The changes and modifications that have taken place since the time of Mr. Wesley were founded on a liberal consideration of the rights of the people, and have tended greatly to enlarge their securities and privileges, without endangering the essential principles of the Wesleyan constitution.

In the appeals made to the public, a grievous wrong is done to the ministry. They try to enlist the press against the Conference, as though it had set itself against the liberty of that great blessing to our country, that guardian of freedom, when no such attempt was ever made or designed. There is no body of people in the world that has done more to benefit the press than the Wesleyan Connexion. Look at the masses they have taken hold of, and made readers. There is, however, a distinction between the liberty of the press, and the improprieties of certain parties. It cannot be expected that the Conference will sanction a newspaper that takes a name giving it the appearance of an official organ, while it is the vehicle of all kinds of slander and misrepresentation.

It is the habit of the speakers at their public meetings to make attacks, not only on the Conference generally, but on individual Ministers, in a manner not becoming Christians. The hissing at the names of eminently good and useful men, such as the President and his brother, Drs. Bunting and Dixon, Messrs. Scott, Rattenbury, and Osborn, is disgraceful to the cause which seeks such support. With all the allowance that can be made for the disappointment and mortification felt by "the expelled Ministers," who, instead of reforming the Connexion, find themselves separated from it, it is highly improper in them to misrepresent the course adopted by the Conference as "un-English," "Romish," &c.; to talk of "cells," "officers," "inquisitors," "Conference tyranny," &c.

The fallacies in the speeches at Exeter-Hall have been exposed by others; there has, however, been equally censurable conduct in subsequent meetings. In Newcastle Mr. Dunn made a most calumnious attack on the amiable Superintendent of that Circuit, styling him "an officer of that cell of the Inquisition;" and stating that he would not let him speak to Mr. Griffith, "but took him by the shoulder to get him away." Mr. Burt has in a becoming manner repelled the railing accusation, and has publicly declared that the statements of Mr. Dunn are utterly false! Any one acquainted with Mr. Burt would know him to be incapable of conduct such as is attributed to him by Mr. Dunn; but the Newcastle people had only recently received him as their Superintendent, and an attempt was made to prejudice them against him before they had become properly acquainted with his peculiarly pacific character.

The attack made by Mr. Griffith on the Ministers at Nottingham was so violent and unbecoming, that to characterize it as it deserves would seem uncharitable. He said, in the course of his furious address,—“Don’t you think Mr. Dunn deserves expulsion? Loutit does! Fox does! Mac Brair does! George Taylor does! Maxwell does!” After misrepresenting the conduct of Mr. Clarkson, and the editor of the Wesleyan Magazine, he proceeded to advise the people to “stop the supplies.” To induce them to do this, he alleged that the defensive pamphlets being circulated were paid for out of the Contingent Fund; and that “the Mission accounts are like King Hudson’s railway accounts,—nothing can be made of them.” As to the first of these statements, he well knew that it was not correct: the Contingent Fund is devoted to the objects for which it has been raised. How can he tell what will be judged the proper course by Committees in months to come? The slander about the Missions is as unfounded as it is calumnious. There are few men beside Mr. Griffith who would have thrown out so vile an insinuation with respect to accounts kept with great care and accuracy by Christian Ministers and Laymen. I do not envy Mr. Griffith’s present state of feeling. For any man to speak of a Minister who has maintained an unblemished character for forty-five years, and who for the second time sustains the highest office in Methodism, in the following language, is most insulting and offensive:—“That impartial President, the very personification of justice. I would have his bust taken, only it should be placed ten thousand leagues distant from Wesley’s.”

In one of the meetings Dr. Hannah was spoken of in the following terms,—“the Inquisitor-General of the Conference, John Hannah, an American Doctor.” Mr. Dunn, though he had abundant proof to the contrary, declared that the statement of Mr. Goodacre was substantially correct; that “the statement was perfectly true;” that “it is a sorry piece of hypocrisy for a man to be so nice about the expression, when he did the deed itself.” Beside this unbecoming attempt to injure a respectable aged Minister, Mr. Dunn utterly misrepresents the statements of those who have engaged in the present controversy. He says the “expelled Ministers” have been compared to “the incestuous Corinthians,” “to Achan,” “to Ananias and Sapphira,” “to Rush,” and “to Man-

ning." Such comparisons have not been made in the pamphlets referred to, any more than the editors of the "Magazine" have compared these three men to Ledru Rollin, Louis Blanc, and Prudhon. It is fair in argument to refer to facts in illustration of the writer's meaning; but it is very unfair to say that an odious comparison is meant by such reference, especially when it is evident there was no such intention. The incessant attempts made to lower Ministers in the estimation of their own people will have to be accounted for on a future day.

Mr. Everett tries hard to bring the Conference into contempt. Mr. Rattenbury, whom God has signally honoured and made extensively useful, is held up to the ridicule of the people; and it is intimated that the whole arrangement of his speaking in the Conference was previously made at the Mission-House, though Mr. Rattenbury has publicly stated that it was his own act entirely. There is no truth whatever in the insinuation as to previous arrangement, or presidential requirement. Mr. Milner, because he asked some important questions that were not convenient for Mr. Everett to answer, is spoken of in the following terms:—"But would they believe that these questions were proposed in such a spirit of bitterness, as would lead one to suppose that this worthy man in propounding them had been wrapped up, body and soul, in a packet of bitter aloes for six months previously?"

Attempts, such as I dare not trust myself to describe, have been made to cast suspicion on the integrity of the Missionary Secretaries, especially as to the department so ably conducted by Mr. Hoole.

To persons at all acquainted with Mr. Hoole, it is unnecessary to say that he never received any personal benefit from discounts, commissions, or anything of the kind. An honourable man, and Christian Minister, who has refused tempting offers of worldly advantage, because he felt pledged to serve the church, ought not, with his equally disinterested brethren, to be subject to such insulting insinuations. I can testify, from personal knowledge, after full and careful examination, that none of the Secretaries derive pecuniary profit from any such source.

The insinuations so industriously spread as to want of integrity at the Mission-House, have no foundation in truth. The expenditure is watched over by a mixed Committee of, at least, honest men. "The General Ac-

counts of the State and Expenditure of the Missions" are presented once a year to a large Committee of Review, consisting of numerous lay officers of the Society and other friends, added to the General Committee.

The amounts stated in the Report, from year to year, as salaries to the Secretaries, are known to include Children's Allowances, as well as some other incidental charges not coming under any other head: and if the alleged excess of ten years, as stated by the complaining parties, be looked at with this knowledge of facts, it will be seen that there can be no ground of suspicion against the Treasurers or others of having dealt unfairly in this matter.

Those who direct their attention to our Mission-House expenditure, as compared with other societies, should remember that the Centenary-Hall is used for various other connexional purposes which entail considerable expense; and that the Wesleyan Missionary Society is the only one which examines and controls the whole financial and disciplinary arrangements of every Mission Station throughout the world. When this is taken into the account, it will be seen, not only that this arrangement entails an amount of labour unknown in other Societies; but that the increased agency in our own during the last few years bears no adequate proportion to the increased duties and responsibilities arising from the increase of members and agents abroad, the enlargement of the Missionary field, and the addition of 56,000 members to the society.

Though the "expelled Ministers" choose to reiterate the statement that the second issue of the "Declaration" was intended to injure Mr. Walton, they have the means of knowing that it was not so, but was occasioned by the too early triumph of their own party, and by the desire of brethren whose names did not appear in the "Declaration," and had been unjustly claimed by an over-eager party on the other side.

Various unworthy attempts are made to damage the character of this very important document. It is pretended that many have signed through fear; that some of the signatures are "forgeries:" and Mr. Griffith has the boldness to say, in his own peculiar style, that the "Declaration" is "an imposition, a lie, a public deceit." This is a serious charge, and the brethren concerned are willing to meet it whenever evidence is produced; but the word of Mr. Griffith is not sufficient. If he has names,

let him produce them. It will not be satisfactory to say he has the names, but is not at liberty to give them. If he is in communication with Ministers who can act so cowardly a part as to assure him that their names have been forged, and yet will not allow him to make known who they are, I can only say, the testimony is worth little that comes in such a form. I have in my possession the letters of the brethren whose names I forwarded for publication; and I am certain that Messrs. Osborn and Chettle are incapable of practising any such deception as that represented. Better authority than any that has yet appeared must be produced before the "Declaration" will be proved worthless, or be so regarded by the public.

It is no wonder that the "Declaration" is hated by those who would have persuaded people that there were hundreds of Ministers who sympathized with them; but all the malicious attacks made on Mr. Osborn, and all the profession of want of confidence in the document, will not alter the fact, that eleven hundred Preachers have declared against the "Fly-Sheets."

Besides the advice of Mr. Wesley to "ferret out" the sowers of discord, we find that in his day three distinct "Declarations" were signed by the Preachers. A parade is made of the names of the Rev. Joseph Fowler, Joseph Beaumont, and James Bromley; and it is asked, "What did they not?" We answer, that neither Mr. Fowler nor Dr. Beaumont used the "Fly-Sheets" as the vehicle of their sentiments; they have too high a sense of honour for that; and Mr. Bromley declares he does not know the author of the "Fly-Sheets," and was no party to his sentiments appearing in those papers. Mr. Fowler voted and spoke in support of the resolution found page 10. The present sentiments of this truly excellent Minister are stated in the following letter to a friend:—

"Leeds, Sept. 1st, 1849.

"I ENTIRELY agree with you in reference to the decisions of the recent Conference. If there had been any doubt in any mind, the wicked conduct (not to use a worse description) of the party since their expulsion, must have removed it. How many souls will they be the instruments of misleading, and perhaps ruining for ever! And, really, if any unbiassed person will honestly look at the question, what will be his conclusion? What is the liberty claimed by the expelled? Clearly this: 'If I can print and propagate slander and falsehood against my bre-

thren, without any legal evidence being obtainable of my having done so, I claim the right to do it. No matter how strong the suspicion, I will not *criminate* nor *clear* myself; and yet I demand all the privileges of a fellow-Minister. The vile document is without the name of printer or publisher (so it was at first); but I decline to say whether I am any party to the publication, or have any knowledge of it!' Can any person defend this conduct? It seems to me not UNTIL THEY HAVE LOST SIGHT OF REASON AND RELIGION!

“JOSEPH FOWLER.”

The names of Dr. Clarke and Mr. Isaac have been made prominent in these proceedings, as if their opinions or practices gave a sanction to the present agitation. Nothing could be more deceptive. Dr. Clarke, in a letter written a few months before his death, declared that no great institution in the world was so well and faithfully managed as the Wesleyan Missionary Society. This truly great and good man was, to the last moment of his life, strongly attached to the system and to his brethren. He went to the last Conference which he attended with his mind pained; but he returned from it satisfied and delighted. In the Appendix to his Life it is stated by his son that he dwelt “with much pleasure and much affection on the universally kind feeling shown him by his brethren at the Conference.” “Indeed, he several times *abruptly* introduced a mention of the joy he felt, which clearly proved what great hold the circumstance possessed in his mind.” The good Doctor wrote on the back of a copy of the Stations, “The Conference is great and glorious.” I heard Dr. Clarke state in that Conference his unabated attachment to the brethren, and his high satisfaction with their conduct towards him. In proof of perfect confidence in Dr. Bunting, he previously spent a long time with him in arranging, and committing to his friendly care, matters of great importance to the Connexion. In the Album of a friend he gave his last testimony to Methodism in the following striking words:—“From a long and thorough knowledge of the subject, I am led conscientiously to conclude, that Christianity itself, as existing among those called Wesleyan Methodists, is the purest, the safest, that which is most for God’s glory, and the benefit of mankind; and that both as to the creed there professed, the form of discipline there established, and the consequent moral practice there vindicated. And

I believe that among them is found the best form and body of divinity that has ever existed in the church of Christ, from the promulgation of Christianity to the present day." Those who had the honour of Dr. Clarke's friendship would do well to imitate his example.

The name of Mr. Isaac, also, has been dragged into the speeches of the expelled Ministers, as though there was something in his case analogous to their own. These gentlemen resist all tests as "Romish and oppressive." What says Mr. Isaac on this subject? In his Works, vol. i., p. 445, as quoted by an able writer in the "Watchman" of September 12th, we have the following passage, with reference to those in Leeds who called themselves Protestant Methodists:—"Where there was no proof, it was contended, there ought to have been no jealousy; and it was considered unjust to bring a man to such a test, whose Methodistical loyalty could not be impeached without it. That there was an organized opposition to the Preachers, and some important rules of the Connexion, no one now pretends to deny; and that no society, civil or religious, could long subsist, in which such things should remain unnoticed, is too plain to require proof. And yet, it seems, no test is to be applied, in the absence of positive evidence, to ascertain who are the guilty party. And where did your Protestant agitators learn this? *Here they bawl about the liberty of Englishmen, and the liberty of the Gospel, at a most marvellous rate.*" (Pp. 446, 447.)

Referring to the "Declaration" signed by the office-bearers of Leeds, Mr. Isaac says, "To have kept in their office men who were determined to attend opposition meetings, would have amounted to a surrender of discipline, and a dissolution of the society. If you have left us, therefore, on account of the test, you left us because we would not give up the whole of our discipline, and act contrary to the laws of both God and man. Think on these things; and may God open your eyes to see your sin and danger!" (P. 451.) Again, p. 507, is the following passage: "It is said the Conference is enslaved by them (the principal Preachers); that if a Preacher dare to oppose them, he is punished by being sent to a poor Circuit, &c. Now, what was the fact in my case? Nearly all the principal men were opposed to me, and certainly I did not spare them; but instead of their transporting me to the worst Circuits for fourteen

years, I have, during that period, had a run of several of the best Circuits in the Connexion. This fact proves either that they do not possess the power ascribed to them, or, if they do, that they do not pervert it: if the former be the fact, the Protestants are calumniators; and if the latter, the Preachers deserve the power they do not abuse." Dr. Clarke and Mr. Isaac are referred to as persons who had cause to complain of the Conference. We have their own testimonies as to their love of the system, and of the brethren. They never acted as Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith have done; nor did they at any time encourage such proceedings. The keen and telling remarks of Mr. Isaac will apply with full force to the agitators now at work; and, as they admire his *liberalism*, let them feel reproved by his strong, but becoming, condemnation of conduct too much like their own. His testimony is a sufficient refutation of the oft-repeated libel, that a man is sure to be punished if he dares to oppose a certain party in Conference. The "Fly-Sheet" party have lauded Dr. Beaumont, Messrs. Fowler, Stanley, S. Jackson, W. Vevers, and the maligned, but noble-minded, G. Osborn, for honestly and boldly opposing those who are improperly called the "clique." Have these Ministers been sent to poor Circuits?

Their selection of names from among the brethren for special approval has proved rather unfortunate for themselves. Mr. Stanley, sen., has been a special favourite. In "Fly-Sheets," No. 1, p. 22, it is said, that "there is not a man in these packed connexional Committees equal to Mr. Stanley for wisdom and experience." Very well, gentlemen; the opinion of Mr. Stanley is entitled to all possible respect. This venerable Minister, who has always been *liberal* in his views, and on terms of intimate friendship with Mr. Everett, has written two admirable letters in defence of Conference. In one of these letters, after inquiring why the people should think the three "expelled Ministers" right, and all the rest wrong, Mr. Stanley declares that, after attentively watching the proceedings of Conference for nearly threescore years, he has always found the greatest reluctance to expel a brother. He justifies the act of Conference on the ground of law and usage, and regards such law and usage as essential to ministerial confidence and union; and says, "If the Ministers choose to unite on this principle, any one who refuses to act upon it cuts himself off from the body."

In a second letter this venerable Minister observes :—
 “ My opinion is, that the whole agitation is wicked in its *origin*, wicked in its *progress*, and in the *manner* in which it is conducted.”

Mr. S. Jackson is praised in the “Fly-Sheets,” though they conveniently keep back the part of his speech in the Conference of 1847 which told most powerfully against the slanders in those papers. Mr. S. Jackson has also boldly and wisely defended the Conference, and exposed the attempts of its adversaries, in various letters, written with great power and good temper.

It is declared, that a considerable number of Circuits have expressed sympathy with the “expelled ;” but there must be a lack of real cases, when such Circuits as City-Road, Sheffield West, Leeds, &c., &c., are put upon that list ; while it is notorious that the mass of officers in each place are decidedly in favour of the Conference. It is well known that nearly all the Circuits opposing the recent expulsions, have done so under excitement, arising from misrepresentation ; and, notwithstanding that great disadvantage, in almost every case resolutions have been adopted, expressive of a fixed determination to maintain the constitution of Wesleyan Methodism unimpaired and unaltered. Very few Circuits are committed to the sweeping changes now proposed. One or two meetings have been inconsistent enough to declare their purpose to maintain the constitution, and, at the same time, have proposed a fundamental change. Truly good men, who may have been led away under the influence of popular excitement, will hesitate before they commit themselves to such alterations as are now proposed, by those who, but a few weeks since, publicly declared that they intended no such change.

According to Mr. Dunn’s confession, he does not know what changes are to be proposed, until a meeting of “Delegates” shall have been held ; but he does know that every man who attends such meeting will, by that act, endanger his continuance with the body, by the violation of our connexional principles ; as is plainly shown in the Plan of Pacification itself, as well as in the Minutes of 1835. It is most absurd to suppose, that persons elected as “delegates,” by uproarious public meetings, open to all comers, will be allowed to continue in our fellowship, while they carry on the farce of framing a constitution. Those who draw unsuspecting men into

such a snare, are justly chargeable with the mischiefs which must of necessity follow.

Do those who are now out of connexion wish others to try the blessedness of expulsion? A conversation which took place between Mr. Everett and Mr. Dawson, bearing on this point, is found recorded, p. 351 of Dawson's Life. Mr. Dawson said to Mr. Everett, "You have been suspending Mr. —, for attending public meetings of a political character." "There is great sympathy excited for him in the country." To which Mr. Everett replied, "That may be; in all cases of *suspension*, the greater the offender, the greater the sympathy." Mr. Dawson remarked, "When we suspended Mr. —, at Leeds, about seventy Local Preachers espoused his cause, and went off with him,—determined to *hang*, or, if you please, *suspend*, themselves in consequence." These are poor compliments to sympathizers, and the consideration of them just now might be productive of good.

The public press is said to be against the Conference.

It should be remembered that the gentlemen of the press in general know very little of the peculiar system of Methodism; and that they have frequently attacked us before. The "Times" not only ridiculed good Mr. Dawson, but attacked our Missions generally. The qualifications of some of these Editors to deal with the question, may be judged of by the following specimen: "Conference consists of one hundred self-elected Ministers, who do all the work,.....for which pay is given; and some of this is good enough, as it is understood that Dr. Bunting had £700 in one year for his share (!!!); and, besides this, all the best livings are given to members of Conference." This sagacious Editor also observes, that Conference has got made over to itself the property of all the chapels and schools belonging to the body, and also all the funds. How can any one be qualified to write on a subject of which he is so profoundly ignorant, as this Editor is of Methodism? He does not even know that the funds of the Connexion are in the hands of the laity, or that the Conference has no property whatever in either schools or chapels; and yet he is to dogmatize on what Conference has done. Many who have written on the subject have had equal knowledge of the merits of the case with the Editor referred to. Some of the best portions of the press have defended the "proceedings of Conference:" as the "Daily News," the "Standard," the "Morning Herald,"

the "Britannia." The "Record" had a remarkably well-written article in favour of Conference. In the provinces, the subject was well argued by several very respectable papers.

Mr. Kaye's "Times" is the avowed organ of the "expelled Ministers," and, of course, it warmly advocates their cause, and they uniformly recommend its circulation. According to the testimony of all the Ministers to whom I have spoken on the subject, and they are not a few, the accounts given in that paper of the proceedings of Conference are most misleading and unfair. Its columns have been open to all kinds of attacks on the system and the executive. The President has been called "a modern Jesuit," an "Inquisitor-General," an "imitator of Judge Jeffreys," &c., &c. It is stated that "a more grinding and oppressive system of policy was never devised out of the Romish Church, than that under which the Wesleyan societies are placed by the enactments of its Ministers."

The injustice done to Mr. Naylor, and, more recently, to Mr. Thomas, in which falsehood and insolence were combined, proves the readiness of that paper to injure ministerial character. Men who are not members of our society are allowed to abuse and slander Ministers of Christ, and to give all manner of false statements, as in the case of Harwich. An Associationist, writing as though he were a member of the Quarterly Meeting, gives a statement which is an entire fabrication.

Most calumnious attacks are made on the managers of our Missionary affairs. Week after week it was pretended that there was something very startling to come out with reference to the Jamaica District, and that there was a defalcation amounting to some thousands, of which they had information. When it was proved that there was not one word of truth in all this, the Editor turns round, and has the assurance to put forth a document which has no relation whatever to the charge he had slanderously made. When publicly convicted of falsehood, he had not the honesty to confess his fault, but attempted another deception. And now, unable to prove any of the charges so freely brought against official men, he insinuates that something will come out shortly, that will astonish the public. These hopes seem to have failed. If the glorious cause of Missions is not injured, it will not be for want of ingenuity and perseverance on the part of this Editor and a few of his friends.

It was as offensive to good taste, as it was inconsistent with religious feeling, to make sport with a disease which was desolating dwellings, breaking domestic circles, and was at the time hurrying thousands of souls into eternity, week by week, thus manifesting that God had a controversy with us as a nation.

There was a lamentable departure from every thing like propriety, in parodying portions of God's holy word. This has been the case more than once; but it was specially distressing to find a professedly religious paper trifling in such a way with a passage on the atonement. (Rom. viii. 32.)

By a series of deceptive and false statements, this official organ of the "expelled Ministers" has contributed largely to the production of that excitement, which has led some few persons to withhold their contributions from the Missionary Funds, and others to make unholy attempts to disturb our public meetings.

Members, and even in some few cases officers, of the society, have determined to withhold their support from various Funds of the Connexion. Beloved and venerable men, who have borne the burden and heat of the day, who have benefited thousands by their ministry, are to be left to linger out their remaining days in helpless poverty, not only neglected by those who are under the deepest obligation to them, but deprived of the small allowance that had been promised to the Supernumerary Ministers. If the last Conference had done wrong, it would be alike "ungenerous, unjust, and cruel," to inflict such punishment on aged and infirm Ministers, whose time and strength had been spent in doing good, and who never sought the means of enriching themselves. Dependent on the Auxiliary Fund are many *widows indeed*, whose husbands shortened their lives by over-strained efforts for the welfare of mankind. These blessed men counted not their lives dear unto themselves, if they might but win souls to the Saviour, supposing that their widows and fatherless children would be taken care of by that section of the church, for the promotion of whose interests they had laboured incessantly. In what way have desolate widows and helpless orphans forfeited their claim to the small pittance allowed for their support? Is it a crime to be related to those who, after a life of hard toil, have been called to their reward? Have the dead offended these sensitive persons? Is this the appropriate return for spiritual good received?

The Missionary cause is to be treated in a similar way. Noble-minded men, who have given up home, country, and friends to dwell among savages, are to be left with their families unsupported by those who sent them out, and were pledged to provide for them. Infant churches rising up among the ignorant tribes of Africa, or the degraded cannibals of Feejee, may be left to be scattered by the destroyer, as sheep without a shepherd. Persons brought from the lowest state of human wretchedness, if left to themselves, will sink again into the horrors of Heathenism. If this scheme could succeed, Missionaries must be withdrawn, chapels and schools must be closed, and souls, more precious than all material nature, must be left to perish in their sins. Why are the "supplies to be stopped" when Missionaries are dying in consequence of over-exertion, when multitudes are appealing to our pity, and saying, "Come over, come over and help us," when almost all parts of the world are presenting fields already white unto the harvest, and the labourers are yet few? Young men eminently qualified for the Missionary work are saying, "Here we are, send us." The world wants them; the Saviour commands the church to send them. Facilities are constantly increasing, doors of usefulness are opening in every direction. To show that those who join in this agitation are offended, immortal beings, dropping into perdition by millions, may still cry, "No man cared for our souls." Romish and Heathen Priests will rejoice; infidels and scorers will laugh, and say, "So would we have it." Infernal spirits will delight in all this mischief; but what will the blessed Saviour say? Will He who died for the world's salvation say, "You did right to leave souls to perish for ever, while you attempted to force my Ministers into submission?" Looked upon in solemn relation to the day of judgment, it is an awful proceeding. The design is a disgrace to our denomination, an opposition to the law of Christ, and to the dearest interests of humanity. The attempt is sure to fail; but those who make it will not be the less to blame. Men might as well expect to imprison the free air, extinguish the light of heaven, or drive back the rolling tide, as to arrest the progress of that cause for the advancement of which the blessed Saviour died upon the cross, and is now seated upon the throne of universal sovereignty. Let those persons who in any way interfere with the work of Christ mind what they are about. It is a perilous

undertaking to attempt to arrest the progress of the Gospel chariot. I would not have the responsibility of such professors of religion for ten thousand worlds.

The constitution of Wesleyan Methodism is substantially sound and scriptural. It is well adapted to promote the diffusion of religious truth. The rise and progress, the extent and preservation, of our religious denomination, prove that "God is with us of a truth." By the divine blessing, this society has been preserved from heresy in doctrine, and from tyranny in government, for more than a century. The rights and liberties of the people are so closely interwoven with the principles of the constitution, that it is impossible to destroy the one without ruining the other. It is impossible to provide more secure guarantees for the continued soundness of doctrine, and purity of the lives of the Ministers, than the legal and disciplinary guards which the Wesleyan economy affords. Let the history of a hundred years testify. Methodism, like the oak of our native forests, will live in all its vigour during the storms of centuries. Nothing is more calculated to endanger true liberty than secret cabals and anonymous attacks. Nothing is more destructive to the interests of the pure and peaceable religion of the Gospel than strife and contention amongst those who make a profession of religion. The work of God was prevailing last year to a great extent: a net increase of nearly 9,000 members, besides the thousands required to make up for deaths and backslidings; and in addition to this, more than 24,000 persons on trial for membership; ought to teach persons to be very cautious how they interfere with such a cause. Let all who love truth and consistency be on their guard against attempts made to promote reckless innovation, under the profession of necessary reform.

THE END.